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India—A Developing Country with A Difference

BRIGADIER Y. A. MANDE

IN the previous article, we had examined the problems of development and the developing countries. It is often stated that India is an important developing country. There are some who view India as a leading country in the Third World. Now, what precisely is meant by such statements?

If by 'leading country' we mean that India is chairing NAM, then the statement is misleading because chairmanship is subject to change. If by development we mean higher standard of living then, the statement is again misleading because countries like Malaysia, Pakistan, Indonesia, Egypt etc have done better than us and the oil-producing countries are frankly rich. If by importance we imply geo-political location, industries and military power then, China is a contender, and in any case her importance cannot be questioned.

It would, therefore, be more apt to consider India merely as a developing country with a difference because of her policies and approach to development.

Now, while evolving policies, every country follows peculiarities of her own situation—its past historical experience of the people, its assets and limitations. Whether policies and approach imply importance or are indicators of progress is something to be seen, which time alone can tell.

While analyzing India as a developing country, we will follow the same line of approach as in the previous article.

POLITICAL STABILITY

Democracy in India is stable; its roots are firm. The success of democracy in India is due to many factors such as the character of the people, historical experience, charismatic leadership, the bold resolve to introduce democracy as a form of government, the political neutrality of the armed forces and so on. It would be difficult to state which factor is most important; nor is it essential.

It is often stated that the people of India are democratic by nature and democracy had existed in India even in ancient times, quoting the example of village panchayats. Such statements are misleading because never in our history had we a form of government like modern democracy. If village panchayats had any significance, we should have been following the model of basic democracy. It would be more correct to say that democracy after independence was a bold venture and the fact is that it works.

The continuation of democracy in India is due to the nature and character of the people. The people are highly individual, very conscious of personal ethic and not very bothered about those who are in power. Money, status and formal authority has never earned respect from the people. Our society respects moral authority and those who sacrifice themselves for the people. The teachings of the Upnishads hold good—"Take that much as you need, the rest belongs to the society". Radhakrishnan adds that our needs are much lesser than what most of us imagine. The country is very religious but unlike in the West, the religious leaders have never claimed political power. The great men of India were those who renounced power—Buddha, Ashok and Bhog are a few examples. Even in modern days Gandhi and Jayaprakash stayed away from political power. Democracy in India continues partly because of people's indifference to which patience and tolerance must be added. Well, things are changing fast in the country but such was the social situation prior to independence.

The Indian struggle for independence was a gradual affair dating back from the year 1885, when the Indian National Congress was formed. During the course of these long years, the country had ample opportunities to produce leaders of merit and rare qualities. The pre-independence leaders were intellectuals who had a vision of the shape of things to come for India. Most of the policies which we are now following were discussed, deliberated upon and formulated long before independence. Independence to India did not come about all of a sudden and in a sense the transfer of power was very smooth. It is because of charismatic leadership, faith of the people and the social situation at that point of time which enabled India to experiment with democracy. India was singularly lucky in having something much more than just charismatic leadership. Gandhi and Nehru were great men, much above the class of political leaders. Such men cannot be deliberately produced by any society; they are the treasures of mankind. Nehru continued to enjoy the faith of the people despite the Chinese debacle; such was his personality.

Political stability has yet another aspect. Barring aside two small periods, the Nehru family has been at the helm of affairs since independence. It is for this reason that social, economic and political policies in the country have been very stable.

Yet another important factor which has been responsible for political stability in India is the role of the armed forces and its unflinching belief in political neutrality. The armed forces never took part in the struggle for independence. It is not that the armed forces were not national but the British concept of political neutrality prevailed. There were a few instances and those towards the later years of the struggle served as a warning to the British empire, but on the whole the armed forces have refrained from political activities, even during the British period.

The Indian armed forces, after the independence, have many laurels to their credit. They have done well in war, but their role during peace time has been equally commendable. A certain British citizen, apparently well informed and well acquainted with India asked me a question—"How is it that the Indian army does not interfere in politics?" "Well, for the same reason as the British army does not interfere in their politics", is a simple and plain reply.

Sometimes people express opinions which appear rather silly. It is stated that the appointment of separate service chiefs is a democratic strategem against military take-over. Views are also expressed that the country is too big, its diversity prevents one man rule and the armed forces have not produced popular enough chiefs who can command the respect of the people. In India people are free; they can talk what they like but here is a simple fact—the armed forces are not interested in political power. They have accepted democracy, and political neutrality is an established tradition. Equally, it must be stated that the political parties, as a rule, have not interfered with the routine functioning of the armed forces.

Indian democracy is stable, but that does not mean that there are no problems. The power vacuum, break away from colonial rule and lack of democratic conventions have created enormous problems for the country. We have had a fair share of insurgencies and States trying to tear apart. But somehow we have been able to overcome all such problems. Why? Aristotle's dictum holds good—"But Master, the people will know what is good for them".

In a democracy like ours competition for political power is open. One can gain political power based on caste, religion, language, regionalism and anything else conceivable on earth. However, there is a limit to fool people; ultimately they know what is good for them and they are the best judges. The success of Indian democracy indeed rests with the people. That the country has plenty of opposition but no worthwhile national oposition party is lamentable.

While Indian people applaud democracy and are its zealous guardians, there is no reason why we should condemn other forms of government in the developing world. The historical experiences of people differ; the manner in which other countries have won independence is a great deal different from ours and this has had its impact on the form of government. For example, in China the PLA cannot be kept away; in Indonesia and Egypt the armed forces have a legitimate claim for political power, in Africa one-party system is advocated because of national unity. Dictatorships and military regimes are valid if the country is in total political disarray. Atleast, in so far as economic growth is concerned, totalitarian governments are capable of showing better results.

What then is the importance of democracy? We discuss this aspect as this is an important feature of India as a developing country. In the previous article, we had discussed the legitimacy of political power and to whom should power belong? As a historical process, in the march of civilisation, democracy as a form of Government has come to stay. No body questions it in developed countries. Bertrand Russell's remark is worth noting—"Democracy is not the best or the final form Government; it is better than the previous ones which we have known".

In the previous article we had mentioned that development is ultimately that of the people. Also, the only argument which the developing countries can proffer against democracy is that the people are not fit. We should also note that people in India have created and are creating innumerable troubles for democracy and yet it has survived, muddling through and gaining strength. All that we can say and with credit is that, politically, India is moving in the right direction.

ECONOMIC POLICIES

The Indian economic experience and planning differ a great deal from those of other developing countries. To say that our economic

policies are under democratic environment will amount to a platitude. What makes our economic policies different from others is the vision of our fathers. How far were they right? Incidentally, it must also be mentioned that an ongoing system cannot be changed easily unless there is a catastrophe.

If we go back to the early fifties, we will find that Jawaharlal Nehru had laid great stress on scientific education and research. That was the time when national physical laboratories, chemical laboratories and various institutions on engineering, medicines etc. proliferated all over in the country. In the previous article, while analysing historical review, we had noted that science and technology are responsible for development. After years of struggle, we can now proudly say that science and technology exist in our country. What more!, the development of scientific temper has been incorporated even in our constitution.

Our policy on industrialisation has been equally unique. The stress during the nascent years was on basic and heavy industries. We did not go in for consumer and fast paying industries. We adopted a dual approach for industrialisation, i.e. the public and private sectors. Our industrial policy and economic plans come under criticism and it must because that is the only way to learn and improve.

It was alleged in the seventies that our economic policies are topsy-turvy. We neglected agriculture and hence the years of drought and massive import of foodgrains. Well, the plan emphasis was modified and in a very short period the country achieved self-sufficiency in food production. While we can compliment ourselves on this success, we must bear in mind the reasons for our achievements. We must remember that in the nascent years we had laid maximum stress on science and technology. Today, no one doubts the role of science and technology in the green revolution. We must not ignore the commendable work done by agricultural sciences and research; it is something which now the other developing countries want to learn from us.

The public sector always comes under criticism and why not? After all it utilises public money. The arguments in favour of public sector such as-in India there was no private capital; the public sector concerns itself with those industries which promote private sector etc are valid, but one must confess that these are old and, therefore, should be shelved. What is more important to understand is that in a country like India, despite its colonial past and social

sentiments against the concentration of wealth in private hands, the private sector survives and continues to grow. Incidentally, Jawaharlal Nehru who strongly believed in the public sector was also the most avowed supporter of the private sector. The private sector has thrived because of support from the central leadership. Today the private sector has come up, but it is in no way comparable to the western countries where the private sector invests money, makes profit or loss without government's help. As and when the private sector comes up and develops the capability to function without the government's help, the shift from public to private sector can always take place, but right now it does not appear feasible. Our dual approach of public and private sector has inherent flexibility.

The proponents of protectionism would argue that protection is essential for the development of indigenous industries. In India it is remarkable that our streets are not flooded with foreign cars, and shops display mainly Indian products. We can be proud to say that we have not sold our market to the foreigners. The Indian market is intact allowing plenty of scope for further industrialisation. At the same time, the antagonists are not wrong in saying that protectionism has led to lethargy, lack of interest in R & D and competition to serve the consumers. What evidently is required is a balance and now that protectionism has been in existence for many years, perhaps there is a need for liberalisation. The arguments of antagonists are valid and one can see the trend in their favour.

So far so good. But, the most severe criticism that we face is what has India done to eliminate poverty? How can we praise our economic or industrial policies when 48 per cent of our population still lives below the poverty line? We cannot ignore the fact that the late starters like Malaysia, Indonesia, Egypt, Korea, Thailand, Taiwan etc. today are much better than us as far as elimination of poverty is concerned. How do we justify our policies?

Every country has to be examined as a case by itself based on its own merits. Unfortunately we do not have oil, rubber, tin and other strategic materials. We have to live with such realities. It is in this context that approach to elimination of poverty assumes importance.

In our country we have given maximum importance to science and technology, basic industries and self-reliance. We have gone in for long-term goals and feel that poverty will be eliminated provided

the basic structure is sound. Perhaps, we have also taken into account the character-traits of our people; after all there have been no agitations or morchas on account of poverty.

Unlike us, the other developing countries have gone in for immediate results by paying attention to improvements in the living standards of people. One does not know which approach is more appropriate. Those who feel that the material quality of life must be improved first and the basic structure of society, based on sciences and technology, will adjust itself automatically are not wrong. However, India has its own reasons. We can be proud of certain achievements; ours is a very poor country with a very strong economy. We generate 90% of our plan expenditure, and our foreign debts and borrowings are by no means alarming. We are more self-reliant than any other developing country producing a wide range of industrial goods. We are in every field of science and technology from oceanography to space. Once again it is re-iterated that India is a country with a difference because of her approach to economic development.

SOCIAL POLICIES

India can well claim to be a developed country as far as the form of government, science, technology and industries are concerned. It is the Indian society which is undeveloped and poor.

Good social policies are vital for development. However, one has to be very careful in application of social policies and here utmost caution is required. Societies are complex and the differences are basically that of social institutions, values and attitudes. Science and technology do not admit human differences; the teachings of science are universal, the benefits of its application such as medicines, electricity, means of communications etc. are also universal, but the cultural differences are far too many. There is also the problem of ego. Herodotus, the first historian who had travelled far and wide, observed that when you ask any community which customs and practices are best, they will invariably state their own.

And indeed this is the basic problem. Every group or community feels that their religion, language, codes, customs, conventions, dresses, food habits etc. are the best. Under such a situation, how does one set about developing societies? Well, luckily the case is not all that bad; by mere contact and inter-action, people do realise what is bad about them and good about others although they may not openly

admit. Adler was not wrong, all of us suffer from an inferiority complex. Besides, education is a great eye-opener. A great deal of give and take has taken place and will take place more rapidly as the inter-relation and inter-action increases. But, the cultural changes are very slow and in a sense it is desirable. Frequent and rapid changes are not at all desirable for a society as these may create emotional and psychological problems.

Our social policies are based on the peculiarities of our social situation. They are not easy to implement because ours is a huge country which is multi-religious, multi-lingual, multi-racial and multi-cultural. India is a country of diverse cultures bound together by a single thread, what we often call as unity in diversity.

Secularism is one of the important social policy of our country. Secularism does not mean absence of religion but it implies that all religions are treated alike with equal respect—"Surve Dharma Sam Bhava". In our country it cannot be otherwise. Hinduism is the dominant religion encompassing more than 80 per cent of the population. But Hinduism is not a dominating force since the religion is least proselytising and the regional diversities are far too many. Elections certainly cannot be won in the name of Hindu religion. Hinduism is a misnomer; it is a name given by the foreigners for want of a better word. It is an ancient religion, evolved in the country and mother religion to many. Its strong point is that it has survived despite numerous challenges and its weak point is the caste system, hence conversions. Religion-wise the population is so mixed up that every religious community is in majority at one place and minority in the other. That religion is made the cause of conflict, is typical of developing countries to which India is no exception. It is unfortunate that when poor people get money they spend it for religious resurgence. It will take time for people in developing countries to understand that religion is a personal matter and it should never enter into politics. It will take time for people to put religion in its proper place. It will take time for people to understand Nietzsche's arguments that religion was born when the first clever man came across fools. Nietzsche is known for emotional, inspired writings sometimes verging on to insanity. But surely, people can see it for themselves that religion is being made use of by certain people for political power, amassing of wealth and exploitation of people. Buddha after years of meditation concludes that pain exists; Chandogya Upanishad declares the eternal truth that "Not until mankind learns how to roll the sky like a hide, will there be an end to human misery; unless He is known first". Religion can

give us peace, solace, faith, confidence, control on passions etc which no social, economic or political organisations can ever give. But at the same time, no religion can effect development, for development is a function of science, technology and secular organisations. Hopefully the situation will improve; presently all that one can say is that secularism in our country is a sound social policy.

Our social policies for the removal of untouchability, doing away with the evils of the caste system, emancipation of women etc are commendable. God possibly cannot differentiate between people and sex; these are the products of the human mind with passion for power and control. It is heartening to note that the caste system is gradually losing its influence and women are coming forward. Admittedly the movement is very slow but the fact is that social changes do take time. It is astonishing that in our country a religious head debars Prime Minister from entering a temple. Such are the harsh realities. Where is the man, who at some stage or the other has not suffered from society's high handedness and absurdities? Society will change, of this there should be no doubt. What we need is patience and sound social policies for promoting movement in the right direction.

One can understand poverty in a country, but what about the gap between the rich and the poor? Elimination of poverty is an economic issue, but how does our society accept the wide gap? Earlier, we had noted that the elimination of poverty is about the most difficult task faced by developing countries. Democracy does not imply concentration of wealth in the hands of entrepreneurs, and incidentally in our country there is no right to property. The right to equal opportunity has no meaning if people do not have economic means. Democracy believes in creating an appropriate climate and environment so that people may take off. It is unfortunate that the rich are getting richer but it would be wrong to say that the poor are getting poorer. The country has indeed some sound social policies pertaining to the uplift of tribals and backward classes, loans to the poor, integrated rural development scheme, unemployment benefits etc. At least as far as government services are concerned, the gap has been reduced. But all these are merely a trickle, a drop in the ocean. We are far away from being a welfare state. Evidently we do not have money to carry our poor and unemployed. But, could it be due to the population explosion? It would be interesting to imagine the condition of our country with the present rate of development and the population level of 1947.

Our society suffers from innumerable social maladies, beliefs and superstitions. The standard of hygiene and sanitation is frankly poor.

The public ethic is lacking while the individual ethic is high. Corruption has encroached in every walk of life and money plays havoc in elections and the routine. People are very conscious about their rights while obligations are forgotten most easily. Perhaps education would solve such problems, but here is an enigma—the country has the third largest trained-man power in science and technology but also the largest number of illiterates. The unemployment of the educated is also posing a problem. If the aim of education is occupation and employment, which perhaps cannot be helped, then such education is bound to create militancy. Such problems are puzzling, even brain teasing but thank God our countrymen have wisdom. Perhaps it is the only reason why an otherwise explosive situation has been kept in check.

While we can be proud of many good social policies, it is unfortunate that we do not have any effective population policy. By 2050, at the present rate of growth, we will be the most populous country in the world. The posters, announcements on radio and TV, family planning centres and the little incentives here and there are no good. We need to implement harsh measures. It is unfortunate that religions and their rivalry come in the way of implementation of population policy. Indecision, irresolution, appeasement and wavering on population policy will cause maximum damage to our country.

NATIONAL INTEGRITY

We now examine the problem of National Integrity, a common problem applicable to all developing countries but most applicable to India because of her diversities. Will India hold together?

It is stated that throughout her historical past, India has never been one country as it is today. It is also stated, and rightly, that British rule has united India except for the creation of provinces into Pakistan. The diversities in the country are so many that fissiparous tendencies cannot be checked and it is, therefore, likely that history may repeat itself.

But what is generally not understood is that history is a story of dead people, a narrative in past tense. The conditions existing in the past do not exist today. Also, history is an account of change and if there are no changes history is not needed. If the basic ingredients of nationalism were non-existent, the British could never have ruled over united India. There would have been several British colonies in India. After all the size of country is big and diversities too many.

Nationalism is only a feeling. Religion, language, land bounded by natural barriers etc. are only contributory factors. There are many Christian and Muslim countries but that does not mean peace and cooperation amongst them. The English language is common to many nations. Our country throughout its history has never had a national language, and the official language has never been that of the people. A big country like ours will have diverse regional cultures. If a country bounded by natural barriers is a criteria, then Sri Lanka, Philippines, India etc. should never have had any troubles.

Nationalism is a mental state. It is a feeling of oneness, a sort of consciousness of a kind. This feeling is our heritage, a process which has gone on for centuries. A single thread unites India, from Kashmir to Kanyakumari and from Punjab to the Eastern States. In the old days, because of poor communications, it was possible to have separate kingdoms but nonetheless the feeling of nationalism existed. It is for this reason that the British had no difficulty in uniting India for ease of administration. If nationalism had not existed, the merger of princely states would have been an impossible task.

But nationalism does not mean peace and harmony within a nation. You cannot have people living together without fighting with each other. There are frictions within families, localities, communities and so on. The present threat to national unity is because of certain leaders who threaten national integrity for political gains. Phizo, Laldenga and Jagjit Singh Chauhan belong to this category. Whether people will follow them severing the deep roots of culture is something which merits examination.

Let's begin with some examples. In South India when certain leaders were not happy, the DMK was formed on the language issue. DMK was followed by Anna DMK and Anna DMK was followed by All India DMK. One wonders if there will be an International DMK. One thing is certain: the Tamil language has not affected nationalism. Take the current problem in Punjab. Who are the advocates of Khalistan? Those who could not come to power. Khalistan is a threat if the demands are not met.

When we talk of unity and integrity, the biggest safe-guard for Indian nationalism is democracy. For reason we go back to Aristotle's argument—"But Master, the people will know what is good for them". India is not new to insurgency and fissiparous tendencies. We have had problems in Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Andhra

Pradesh, North Bengal, Kashmir and currently in Punjab. When leaders start movements for their political gains, little do they realise that the same movement will be challenged by other leaders.

Earlier we had observed that societies are rigid and do not change easily. The surface movements do not disturb the depth of society. Our earth produces radical and ambitious people who want power by any means. Competition for political power is open in democracies; but the slogans which aim at disrupting the social structure can never succeed for the society is rigid; its nature is permanence, while individuals come and go.

PROSPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT

This is one part which one would like to leave it open to the readers, but this is precisely the part which they would like to know. When we talk of development, people confuse it with progress and this is understandable. The concept of progress tends to be Utopian-a kind of static society. Now a stable society with no conflicts is a philosophic ideal; even Marx, the most ardent sponsor of a dialectic process cannot escape from it, when he shoots out in the blue that the state will whither away. The old generation recalls the steady and beautiful past where the common man was used to poverty, and the landlords and the rich indulged in luxuries not unmixed with nobility. People recall Ramraj where Ram could do no wrong and the people obeyed him for want of anything better.

But unfortunately ours is a dynamic world. Change and more of change is noticeable in every walk of life. The awakening has come amongst the people and the people will fight for their rights long over due. Education is not necessarily wisdom. The old idea that good sense should prevail in society is outdated. Violence, juvenile delinquency, hijacking etc. are common to both, the developed and the developing countries. Today, we are witnessing religious, regional and lingual conflicts. Tomorrow when these are overcome, we may well see conflicts between the haves and have-nots, and the castes which exist as much in Sikh, and Muslim communities. Let us accept conflicts as normal and face them squarely. It is out of struggle that societies develop. One does not know at what point of time society will become stable, it is certainly not now.

While the economic prospects appear to be bright, we are presently facing grave socio-political problems such as in Assam, Punjab and

Kashmir. But these are precisely the problems through which a country has to go through. However, national unity and integrity is not likely to be upset. Society lives in a state of equilibrium in which it generates forces to counter disruptive surface movements. Nietzsche was right: life cannot be lived without order. Societies pass through cycles of movements in succession-economic, social and political; renaissance, restoration and reformation. Our society is in transition and in reality we are muddling through.

Despite the present socio-political problems that we face, it is reiterated that the basic problems of the country is economic. It is the economic issue which will ultimately dictate national unity. Our industries, agricultural areas, communications, ports etc are so located that interaction between the regions is unavoidable. As people become conscious of economic prosperity, they will realise that India is cut as one country for which the social sentiments exist as part of our national heritage. Again, it is the economic issue which will redeem social evils in society such as castes, the gap between the rich and the poor, the position of women, unholy rivalry between religions, regional languages and so on. It is the economic issue which will strengthen the bond of cultural unity.

The diversities should not cause us concern. The big countries like US and USSR have as such diversity as we have. Diversity is a strength, it is a complementary factor where weakness of one section is balanced by the strength of another. Pluralism is a strength, a catalyst for progress.

Admittedly, our country is facing some grave problems, but our hope lies in the pursuit of sound political, economic and social policies which frequently keep on emerging on the surface. All that one can say is that India is on the right lines.

CONCLUSION

Developing countries share certain common problems such as political turmoil, poor standard of living, absence of social welfare and anxiety for national security. India is not free from these problems but she is a developing country with a difference for many reasons.

With regard to form of Government, India has a democracy whose roots have been firm. In this respect she is comparable to

any developed country, but the democratic conventions have not as yet crystallised. The country has plenty of opposition but no effective national opposition party.

In the economic field, India follows a middle course between the capitalistic and socialistic societies. Both, the public and private sector have a meaning in the Indian context. As far as industrial achievements are concerned, India can well claim to be a developed country.

It is in the socio-economic field, that India is a backward country. Poverty, social discrimination, the position of women, lack of hygiene and sanitation, illiteracy, absence of adequate social welfare schemes etc are the features which make India a developing country, or shall we frankly admit-undeveloped. While our attention today is drawn on socio-political problems, let us not forget that our problems are essentially economic.

Indian unity is a reality and nationalism is part of our cultural heritage. Tomorrow it will be an economic necessity. The threats that we face today are typical of developing societies in transition.

The prospects for Indian development are bright. The country is developing and gaining strength despite numerous difficulties. While our country has to face all kinds of problems, let our attention not be diverted from the main issue ie socio-economic. If India can only check its population growth, all other problems will get resolved in due course.

Indo-Pak Relations

Lt General A M Vohra PVSM

IN February 1984, The Muslim, an independent English daily published from Islamabad organised a seminar on South Asian cooperation. During his visit to Delhi in December 1983 for the NAMEDIA (Nonaligned Media) conference, Mushaid Hussain, the young editor of The Muslim, extended an invitation to me among others explaining that a retired general of the Pakistan Army would be presenting a paper and as strategic issues are of primary relevance, it would be a good thing if a retired general from the Indian Army also attended. He further explained that the frequent ups and downs of Indo-Pak relations and its effect on SARC (South Asian Regional Cooperation) make it necessary that exchange of views, both at the official and non-official level should be a regular process. At the non-official level, such opportunities to give expression to pent up feelings and suspicions, clear the air, promote understanding and help in building opinion.

Invitees from India included journalists, academics and myself - eight in all. There were representatives from Nepal and Sri Lanka. Bangladesh was also invited but was not represented. Pakistan representation was also about eight. However, apart from the panelists, there were at least about 200 spectators from all over Pakistan as it were; Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar and of course Islamabad/Rawalpindi, who participated freely when the discussion was thrown open after the panelists had had their say. Secondly, besides the fairly wide regional representation, the panelists as well as the spectators were from various walks of life; erstwhile politicians, academics, journalists, retired officers of the armed forces, foreign service as well as the civil service and some industrialists.

PUBLIC OPINION IN PAKISTAN

It must be said at the outset that the Pakistani panelists and spectators were very forthcoming and in no way inhibited by the fact of the military rule in that country. One was struck by the occasional fairly open criticism of the regime and the odd show of defiance. For instance, when the discussion was thrown open after the presentation of the very first paper, a young lady journalist got up from among the spectators and asked whether the people of Pakistan should not be

associated with the issues under discussion and was cheered by quite a few. She was informed that the Seminar was open to all and as such the people of Pakistan are associated with the Seminar.

Later that day, at a lunch for the foreign participants hosted by Sahabzada Yakub Khan, the Foreign Minister of Pakistan, he remarked that when a government did not have an electoral mandate, it had to be even more sensitive to trends in public opinion. He was talking in context of the 'No War Pact' offer and making the point that this offer was supported by the people of Pakistan. He elaborated that a non-elected government with weak grass root links with the masses had to make doubly sure that its national policy did not outrun the national consensus.

The fact that the seminar sponsored by a private independent paper had the cooperation of the government and that, during discussion no holds were barred, as it were, supports the Sahabzada's point regarding Pakistan government's anxiety to be informed about public opinion.

Inevitably Indo-Pak relations predominated the discussion. Those who have gone through the experience of the blood bath of the partition of the sub-continent tended to harp on this sad part of our history with emotion and some with rancour. There was also an analysis of the whys and wherefores of the wars we have fought. It was therefore refreshing to see evidence of the fact that the young generation in Pakistan has no hangup of the past. They listened to these gory details and recriminations for a while but were not willing to dwell on these. After there had been a certain amount of talk of the past, they felt that enough is enough and stopped further talk of the e issues. One Pakistani speaker who persisted was actually booed. Several voices were heard saying, "we are not interested in 1947, we were not born then. We have heard enough of the past. Let us talk of the future. India and Pakistan are established countries and neighbours, let us talk about how they can live as friendly ones."

SENSITIVITY

Both the young and the old were, however, one in their sensitivity to moralising by India. Views on the place of democracy, egalitarian society, secularism and on the Gandhian pattern of economy were heard with attention but were counter productive. A typical remark about reference to democracy was, "the people of Pakistan are not on the defensive on the issue as they are committed to democracy and its restoration in Pakistan. They did not need any sermons from outside."

There is considerable sensitivity also on sovereignty and alleged interference in internal affairs. The participants from Nepal and Sri Lanka also talked about India's attitude of superiority and of interference by it in their internal affairs. India's so called big-brother role came under fire from all directions. This was to be expected as, apart from the normal reaction to a large neighbour, there is no dearth of postulations from India about its large size, its industrial base, military might, its regional role and so on. We don't have to be defensive about our size, comparative strength or geostrategic position, but regional roles are acquired by deeds and not by proclamations. Talk about it is unnecessary. Recent events and writings had got our South Asian neighbours really worked up. Pakistan and Sri Lanka have been alarmed by what they call the 'New Indian Doctrine of Regional Security', asserting India's right to interfere in their internal affairs. "Not asking for Indian aid is anti-Indian" were the headlines of a paper from Sri Lanka brought to the Seminar by the panelist from that country. "India claims hegemony over South Asia" said the press in Pakistan. The message at the Seminar was, "We don't want a big brother. We want an equal friend".

The questions raised by the Pakistani Press with the Indian participants give a good insight into issues that preoccupy the minds of the intelligentsia. Of the questions put to me by various reporters, three were common. These related to the 1971 war, Afghanistan and the reasons for the Indian Army being apolitical. While the official Pakistan view point makes much of the Indian hand in its dismemberment in 1971, due publicity was given to the answer drawing attention to the fact that people in power in Pakistan brought about this dismemberment themselves by not taking cognisance of the results of the 1970 elections and not holding serious discussions with Majib-ur-Rehman on his six points. On the other hand military repression and worse was let loose on the people of East Pakistan. The Indian compulsion with ten million refugees on its hands is also better understood now that Pakistan is saddled with three million Afghan refugees itself.

The Indian armed forces staying apolitical is subject close to the heart of most thinking people in Pakistan. The institutionalisation of various elements of the body-politic in India, at an early stage under the stewardship of Jawaharlal, led to the defining of the role of the legislature, the executive, the judiciary, the bureaucracy and the armed forces. That this is one main reason for the apolitical state of the armed forces is appreciated. What goes closer home is the provision in our system for the possibility of a change of government by periodic elections which obviates the necessity of a political role for the armed forces.

The demise of Jinnah, soon after the formation of Pakistan prevented any institutionalisation in that country. With his keen legal intellect, he would have done a good job of establishing and stabilizing institutions. Apropose Jinnah, what hurts Pakistanis no end is the non-recognition of his role in the nationalist movement. They feel that he was a prominent member of the Indian National Congress and his contribution entitles him recognition as a nationalist. An objective appraisal of the sub-continent's struggle for freedom is called for in their view. This should also analyse the reasons for his parting company with the Congress.

AFGHANISTAN AND THE SUB-CONTINENT AS A STRATEGIC ENTITY

The Seminar addressed itself to threat perceptions, force levels and nuclear weapons. The fact that the sub-continent constitutes a strategic entity was noted and it was regretted that the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan did not lead to a regional approach. On the other hand the regional security environment deteriorated due to arms build-up and accentuated Indo-Pak threat perception vis-a-vis each other.

With this background, it was encouraging to hear an unexpected Pakistani perception of the Afghanistan issue ruling out Soviet offensive objective of warm waters of the Gulf or the domination of the oil reservoirs of West Asia. The point that the Russians were apprehensive of the threat of militant Islam to their Central Asian republics was also considered far fetched. Direct negotiations with Moscow for the withdrawal of Soviet troops as also for the repatriation of Afghan refugees in Pakistan was advocated. The Chief exponent of this view point was a former chief of PAF, Air Chief Marshal Zulfiqar Ali Khan, who gave an entirely defensive objective of Soviet move into Afghanistan. Others who gave a similar analysis and advocated direct approach were Mr Sajjad Haider, a former Pakistani Ambassador in India and Mr Aslam Khattak, a former governor of NWFP (He advocated an approach to Moscow using the good offices of Mrs Gandhi).

It must be mentioned that we in India do not fully appreciate Pakistan's concern with regard to its security in view of the situation in Afghanistan. This concern was evident both from the questions posed by mediamen and the assurance that was obvious from the defensive interpretation of the Soviet action given by the Indians questioned. Pakistan's anxiety on this count could well be the motivation of the offer of the 'No War Pact'. It is also anxious about the economic and social implication of the presence on its soil of three million Afghan refugees.

CONSENSUS

In the consideration of the strategic environment the influence of super-power rivalry on the regional stability was analysed. The discussion of this and other issues showed a certain commonality of approach. There was a consensus to the effect that—

- super powers should be excluded from the region;
- there should be no resort to arms among the states of the region;
- the level of armed forces should be frozen as a first step to subsequent reduction;
- nuclear weapons should not be introduced in the region;
- maximum economic cooperation should be promoted;
- an agreement of Helsinki type should be adopted for cultural exchanges.

One might legitimately ask why such commonality of opinion on the non-official level fails to make an impression on the policy makers. The background of suspicion and mistrust has its own impetus. One finds people on both sides who bring every effort to nought by the simple question 'How can you trust them?' There are other reasons. In the present so called 'normal' but uncertain and hesitant state of relations, neither side can overcome the temptation to take advantage of any difficulty of the other. Then there is the factor that the military on both sides have to stay in a state of readiness. They have the responsibility of the territorial integrity of the country and for the performance of this task their bids for latest weapons and increase in the order of battle is inevitable.

THE CURRENT CRISES

Indo-Pak relations have plummetted down once again. Whereas the March and May 1984 meetings of the foreign secretaries held at Udaipur and Islamabad respectively gave hope of a reconciliation of the offers of 'No war Pact' and the 'Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation', the July 1984 meeting was called off at India's request. India is upset at the Pakistani support of the terrorist and secessionist activity in Punjab. There is "flood of intelligence reports confirming suspicion about training camps just across the Indian border" where insurgency training has been imparted and weapons provided. About 50 terrorists from among those who escaped from the Golden Temple complex have taken shelter in Pakistan. In our environment of adversary neighbour relationship, the present difficulties of India in

Punjab proved too tempting an opportunity for Pakistan not to take advantage of.

Pakistan media has had a field day and went to the extent of hoping that the military action in the Golden Temple complex would be India's March of 1971 (when erstwhile East Pakistan started its campaign for what turned out to be separation). Nawai Waqt advocated efforts to "ensure that India is broken into bits in order that the minorities are spared further massacres and its neighbours can maintain their independent entity." There was speculation about India's positive response which was considered tactical, motivated by its difficulties in Punjab and anxiety to prevent Pak support of the Akali agitation as also Mrs Gandhi's political stunt to woo the Indian muslims.

In the words of Bhabani Sen Gupta, "India's proclivity to get involved in political struggle in Pakistan for the restoration of democratic rule is more than matched by Pakistan's readiness to intervene in the bloody, protracted conflict in Punjab."

SUPER POWER INTERESTS

The situation is further complicated by super power interests in West and South Asia. Apart from the soured beginning on account of the blood bath that accompanied the partition of the sub-continent and the complications caused by the principle of lapse of paramountcy of Indian states at the time of the British pull out, Pakistan's perception of weakness made it choose a strategy of external dependence; it asked for and was promised US aid in the mid 1950s. (This materialised in the early 1960s). It joined SEATO and CENTO. Thus the United States got an entry into the sub-continent. Pakistan has ever since been a pillar of US strategy in the region and is currently being provided with military assistance as a part of \$3.2 billion package. Recent developments appear to be a further step in the military build up of Pakistan based on the anxiety of the USA to safeguard its interests. In this context the address of Deane R Hinton, the US ambassador in Pakistan, to the Council of National Security Studies at Lahore on 10th October 1984 has come in for particular comment by the Indian Press which has reported that Hinton discounted the chances of any attack on Pakistan from its West (Afghanistan). He is further reported to have said that in case India committed aggression, US would come to Pakistan's help. This is contrary to India's understanding of the US stand. Speaking at the Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad in March 1984 Brezenzki, former US National Security Advisor to the President, observed that Pakistan should not cherish any false hopes

that America will come to its aid in an Indo-Pak war. He however stated that in case of Soviet aggression, America will support Pakistan in accordance with the 1959 agreement.

State department have explained at a briefing specially held for press correspondents from India and Pakistan on 30 October that Hinton was replying to a question about US response in the event of an attack on Pakistan and had stated that, as per its commitment, the US would be responsive quickly to contingencies from the West. In regard to a contingency from the East, the US will not be neutral if an act of flagrant aggression is committed by anyone. The spokesman further elaborated that in various Indo-Pak conflicts so far, the US had stayed neutral as it had not been able to determine who had actually committed aggression. He also stated that the US-Pakistan agreement provided that the US would defend Pakistan against an attack from a communist country or a communist-controlled country. This would not apply to India as it was not a communist-controlled country.

When dealing with hypothetical question of US attitude in a future Indo-Pak conflict, the pertinent issue is its interests in this region. The objectives of the US administration before the sub-committee on Asia and Pacific affairs of the House of Representatives, which reviewed US aid to Pakistan in February 1984, were (1) Support of Pakistan's security in face of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (2) The need to support Pakistan in a way to promote rather than hinder Indo-Pak and Indo-American relations. (3) Nuclear non proliferation. (4) The need to eradicate opium and heroin production. (5) Support of Pakistan's economic development. (6) Support of Afghan refugees. (7) Support of human rights and political liberalisation.

Although the USA is often suspected of plotting disintegration and accused of working for instability of India, its interests are best served by stability in South Asia and Indo-Pak amity. Its frequent proclamation to this effect are nearer the truth than the apprehensions of some in India. During his visit to this country in May 1984, George Bush, the US Vice President gave assurances repeatedly that the USA was anxious for a strong and stable sub-continent of which India is the pivot. On 1 November, paying high tribute to the outstanding leadership of late Mrs Indira Gandhi, Henry Kissinger said it was in the national interest of United States to have a stable India and suggested that the US administration should do all it can to promote a stable and smooth transition. US academics also advocate promotion of development and political stability in South Asia.

Basically the super power conflict is over political influence in the region. Ensuring availability of West Asian Oil, bases or facilities to support a strong presence in the Indian Ocean and keeping the sea lanes open, follow if this objective is achieved. Neither the USA nor the USSR would be willing to permit domination of the region by the other or accept exclusion from it. Regional understanding, amity and consequent stability would obviate the rivalry for influence as one super power would not be in a position to gain pre-eminence in the region over the other. It is the lack of understanding or rather conflicts among the regional countries that invite super power interference to gain political influence and the advantages that ensue from it.

REGIONAL AMITY

Amity in South Asia is dependent on Indo-Pak relations. As stated in the first part of this article, there is commonality of approach to regional issues at the non-official level. At a symposium on 'Strategic Perceptions' held at the Qaid-e-Azam University in 1982 by the Institute of Area Studies of Pakistan, it was agreed that (1) Pakistan must remain strictly non-aligned. (2) Normalise relations with the USSR. (3) Improve relations with India. These points are an endorsement of the sanity of views at other discussions at the non-official level. (As a matter of interest, the fourth point of agreement at this symposium was—the main threat to Pakistan is from internal factors; inability to find a stable political system, failure to give political and emotional satisfaction to the ethnic minorities of Baluchistan, NWFP and Sind.)

Even those commentators in Pakistan who see India as hegemonic and refer sarcastically to Subrahmanyam's (Director IDSA) vision of India's place in the regional Sun, suggest a regional approach. Siddiqi (Managing Director, Defence Journal Karachi) suggests unilateral declaration of peace by Pakistan so that concerted efforts can be made to develop a strategic consensus and an awareness of geo-strategic challenge and threats facing the sub-continent. (March 1982 issue of the Defence Journal).

At the official level also there is acceptance of the advisability of friendship and cooperation but there are doubts on both sides of the sincerity of the other, so much so that offers of discussion of such vital issues are often treated as a hoax and a facade. The establishment of friendly relations is considered beyond the realm of possibility.

If India, in its own interest, were to pursue the course of friendship and cooperation persistently, irrespective of pin pricks and irritants that

are bound to come on the way, is it possible that confidence may develop and friendly relations be established? I think it is and India should follow this course.

It would be relevant to mention here that Pakistan is no longer likely to opt for a military solution to any problem with India. However, as long as the present environment of mistrust and near hostility prevails, it would certainly continue to take advantage of India's internal difficulties. Therefore, should an opportunity offer itself, it may even go to the extent of using its armed forces to further and speed up the process of weakening India. Two major changes have, all the same, taken place. Firstly, since the 1965 war, Pakistanis no longer consider themselves superior in martial traits. Secondly since the 1971 war, they are convinced that Pakistan can not get the better of India militarily. The advantages of India's size and potential are accepted. Immediately after the 1971 war, Pakistan was anxious to avenge its surrender. Wiser counsels have since prevailed and it is realised that militarily India will always be stronger. The mutually beneficial course of peace, friendship and cooperation will therefore bear fruit if we pursue it persistently and can control the divisive forces within.

Indian Ocean, Global Strategies and Space Warfare

AIR COMMODORE JASJIT SINGH

HISTORICAL factors of civilisation and geo-political inheritance of India have traditionally led to the focus of our attention being directed towards the North West. Inspite of the fact that in the past three centuries the history of the country was affected more from the Indian Ocean, its importance to our security and destiny may not have fully registered on Indian sub-consciousness. In order to understand the anatomy of the paradigms affecting conflict and/or co-operation in the Indian Ocean, there is a need to look deeper into the imperatives, incentives and motivations affecting geo-political situation in the Indian Ocean region, beyond the usual arguments and postulations of conventional wisdom. There is a need to seek out the roots, the very fundamentals of the paradigms of geo-politics operative in the Indian Ocean, before any meaningful examination of the prospects of conflict or co-operation can be undertaken.

For almost a hundred years now, naval political thought throughout the world has been significantly influenced by the doctrines and strategy of sea power propounded by Admiral Alfred T. Mahan. In many ways Soviet Admiral Gorshkov, the "20th Century Mahan" reflects the strategic thought and the importance of sea power propounded by the great American visionary. I might, therefore, begin with the suggestion that the imperatives of conflict and co-operation in the Indian Ocean be viewed against the backdrop of what Mahan had to say about the Indian Ocean; for this contains the clue to a great deal of the strategic dimensions of the problem:

"Whoever controls the Indian Ocean dominates Asia. This ocean is the key to the seven seas. In the twenty-first century the destiny of the world will be decided on its waters." *

This, of course, was stated before war and armed conflict was extended into the third dimension—that of air space. This brought

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forth a new set of geo-political strategists like Giulio Douhet and Alexander Severskey, who propounded the importance of the 'command of air' as a logical extension of Mahan's concepts of 'command of the sea'. It was freedom of air-space that deprived naval power of the security and freedom conferred by the vastness and the depth of the oceans. As we approach the thresholds of the 21st century, when man is able to effectively operate in outer-space, and he has under his command not only unlimited capacity for mass destruction, but also the means to exploit the deep oceans and outer-space for military and civilian uses, one can state with a degree of confidence a paradigm that: *whoever controls the outer-space will control the seas : and whoever controls the oceans and outer-space, dominates the world.* Mahan's prophesy that whoever controls the Indian Ocean, dominates Asia, therefore need to be seen not only in the Indian Ocean being the key to seven seas, but also in its significance and importance in geo-political issues at global and regional scale as well as its role in relation to freedom and control of air-space, especially in strategic warfare.

THE REGION

The geo-political importance of the Indian Ocean is better appreciated by looking at the world map on a globe rather than the usual Mercator's projection on flat paper. The ocean is spread between the longitudes of 20°E to 120°E. Four significant facts of geo-politics stand out in relation to the Indian Ocean:

- all the countries on Indian Ocean littoral (with the exception of Australia) belong to the under-developed/developing categories. Their number also constitutes the vast majority of the nations of the Third World. These Third World countries are characterised by two facts:
- they were, without exception part of the colonial empires of West European nations for the best parts of the 19th and 20th centuries, till they were removed, by peaceful means or otherwise, from colonial rule in the decades between 1940s to 1960s.
- they are nascent nation-states with their vulnerabilities and instabilities heightened by their under-developed status, their aspirations and frustrations arising out of the mirage of the benefits of development on one side and the shackles of economic backwardness on the other; and the trials and turbulence of transition from older civilisational values to those demanded by industrial society in the nuclear age.

—access to the Ocean is either through the two northern narrow “choke-points” of Suez Canal/Horn of Africa and Singapore/Straits of Malacca, or the two southern broader “gateways” at the southern extremities of Africa and Australia. Southern Indian Ocean, in fact provides the shortest distance between the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. It is also pertinent to recall here that after 1973 and the growth of super-tanker container cargo ships, the Suez Canal and Malacca routes are less frequently used for sea borne trade.

—beyond the littoral states, the land mass to the north is dominated by the Soviet Union and China, two communist powers hostile to each other, but at ideological conflict with the Western world. Of these, Soviet Union as the second superpower is in a state of conflict with the United States, aggravated since the advent of the second Cold War which may be dated to March 1978 with the immediate flash-point at Ogaden, in the India Ocean littoral. In strategic terms, the Indian Ocean region constitutes the soft underbelly of the Soviet Union with severe limitations on its ability to reduce its vulnerabilities.

—India is not only the largest, most developed under-developed country amongst the Third World countries of the littoral, but also has consistently displayed its fundamental stability as a nation state; and enjoys features of geography which confer on it some unique advantages.

GEOSTRATEGIC IMPERATIVES

It is in this environment that the change in the *nature* of the presence of external forces, which has been increasing since the early 1960s needs to be viewed. Post World War II era was characterised by the United States taking concrete steps for the containment of the Soviet Union and communist China. This strategy expressed itself in the shape of series of security alliances, from NATO to CENTO and SEATO and other security arrangements. The range over which military power could be projected, and the relatively modest strategic mobility available at that period necessitated a strategy reliant upon an elaborate infrastructure of military bases in countries peripheral to the communist heartlands. The infrastructure and security arrangements were also more easily established because the imperial powers were still in the process of withdrawing from the area, and retained residual influence over countries gaining independence. Progressively, the United States moved in even as the European powers

withdrew. For example, US permanent military presence in the Indian Ocean dates back to 1949 when it established its Middle East Force (MIDEASTFOR) in 1949 in the Persian Gulf and stationed a task force of one flagship and two destroyers at Bahrain—an arrangement renewed with the Government of Bahrain in 1971 after British withdrawal.

The US policy of containment and a strategy of forward deployment as part of security alliances and arrangements provided what amounted to limiting the Soviet (and Chinese) strategic frontiers to their territorial limits: the objective of the containment policy. This strategy, in force for nearly two decades after the World War II ended, had limited reliance on the Indian Ocean. All the same, western powers tried hard to maintain control over the ingress/egress points to the Indian Ocean—Suez Canal (Franco-British invasion of 1956 is one example) and the Straits of Malacca (the first war of Indochina, rebellion in Timur, Malaysian insurgency and attempts to control them) are some examples.

However, it is from the mid-1960s that the complexion of geo-strategic imperatives in the Indian Ocean started changing. Meanwhile the newly-emerged independent states began to assert their sovereign rights and seek leverages for greater freedom of action to pursue their perceived national interests. The collapse of US-organised security alliances on one hand, and significantly enhanced capabilities for power projection and strategic mobility (nuclear-powered aircraft carriers and submarines, long range transport and attack aircraft along with air-to-air refuelling etc.) led to:

- a shift of western (especially US) strategic frontiers away from Soviet borders. In relation to the southern USSR, this has meant what may be seen as a “strategic withdrawal” into the Indian Ocean as against the more concrete security arrangements of earlier years. From the Soviet point of view, this has meant what they refer to as the expansion of the “defensive perimeter”, which according to Admiral Gorshkov can only be based on sea power.
- lesser need for military bases *per se* on land as long as adequate military forces could be maintained and supported at sea: thus generating instead, a need for facilities and access to facilities.
- an ever increasing presence of external forces in the Indian Ocean in pursuit of global strategies and the interests of the developed

countries, albeit at the cost of the under-developed Third World.

—militarisation and military uses of space especially for strategic warfare providing what might be a fresh incentive for the presence of external forces in the region.

It is therefore not surprising that in the last ten years, the security environment of Indian Ocean and its littoral states has undergone a significant, and perhaps ir-reversible change. The area is witnessing an ever-increasing level of tensions and instability in the littoral states; and an ever increasing level of external military presence in the Indian Ocean. Some of the littoral countries have tried to defuse these tensions, reduce dissonances and improve the security environment through propagation of the ideology of non-alignment, regional co-operation, adherence to the U.N. Charter, and even firm proposals like that of Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace and support for Naval Arms Limitation Talks. Success has eluded these attempts so far: and as time goes by, the security environment may be expected to deteriorate, transforming the area, not as expected, into a zone of peace and co-operation, but inexorably driving it instead into the position of a *zone of conflict* in the years ahead; a scenario hardly likely to leave any of the littoral countries unaffected or unscarred. The incentive for the transformation of the region into a zone of conflict stems essentially from two basic issues: firstly, the geo-strategic importance and geo-political imperatives of the region; and secondly, the superpower strategies in the region to influence the geo-strategic factors in favour of their individual interests. And the presence of external forces provides the means to implement these strategies, worsening the security environment and retarding the growth of nation states of the Indian Ocean littoral.

CONVENTIONAL WISDOM: MYTH AND REALITY

The logic of conventional wisdom has produced what have become standard arguments to justify the presence of external forces in the Indian Ocean. A great deal of the basis of these arguments stems from that of superpower 'rivalry'. However, the bulk of justifications are in fact enshrined in myths rather than realities, given great legitimacy and impetus by Western strategic literature. These require close scrutiny: for the realities to be carefully sifted and sighted in this fog of misperceptions.

The logic of these arguments begins with that of the theory of

a "power vacuum" as a result of British 'withdrawal' from East of Suez from late 1960s. Great Britain, for over two centuries, had exercised control and maintained its power structure in the Indian Ocean region by its paramountcy over the littoral states and *not* from the Ocean *per se*: and nor merely because of its naval (and military) forces deployed, or because of its military outposts at Aden and Singapore. Thus, today, when Western strategic literature and governments talk about filling that "power vacuum" by the U.S. (and its allies), serious questions must be asked: whether they are not really meaning to re-establish a Western (U.S. led) paramountcy in the Indian Ocean? Whether the "power vacuum" theory is focussed merely on the Ocean, or directed against the Third World littoral states? Is it an element of strategic deception to provide a cover for their new global strategies?

On the issue of the need for stabilising influence, one fact stands out: India played a pivotal role in the British Empire. India constituted the central core of British policies in Africa, Asia and the Far East, with Singapore, Aden and the Cape of Good Hope functioning as imperial outposts. The power structure of the Indian Ocean region essentially revolved around India. Since India's sovereignty rested in London since the 19th century, British naval power as the primary and dominating external force in the Indian Ocean could be considered legitimate and justifiable. This situation changed on August 15, 1947 when Indian sovereignty came to rest in New Delhi; and if the logic of the naval power structure is to be applied, then New Delhi is the logical inheritor of naval presence to exert the stabilising influence in the region after British withdrawal. However, since the geo-political structure of the region concurrently underwent a significant change, and India has been in no way interested or inclined to follow any strategy of dominance, the legitimate task of retaining and maintaining the requisite naval power structure rests with the littoral states of the Indian Ocean themselves, with commitments and responsibilities in proportion to the size, population and geo-strategic imperatives of the countries concerned. At the same time of British "withdrawal" all the larger Indian Ocean littoral states were independent, sovereign countries: and the few smaller micro-states were in the process of achieving that status. Each of these countries could pursue policies favouring their perceived national interests and maintain security forces related to their needs, capabilities and threat perceptions. The overall naval power of the littoral states was well in excess of the small complement of British naval presence. The concept of "power vacuum" due to British withdrawal, therefore, is patently untenable: and the concept must be viewed realistically for what it

actually is—a strategy to justify and legitimise the presence of external forces in the Indian Ocean in pursuance of the objectives to influence and re-arrange the affairs of the Third World in support of their own national interests (inevitably at the cost of the Third World).

For those advocating that Britain had exerted and maintained its power structure and control over the Indian Ocean region because of its naval forces deployed, or because of its military bases like Singapore and Aden, it needs to be pointed out that British naval military power in the Indian Ocean rapidly dissolved at the very outset of the challenge posed by Japan during World War II. In this context, the relative impotency of Western naval armada deployed into the northern reaches of the Arabian Sea in an effort to maintain un-interrupted flow of oil through the Persian Gulf only tends to reinforce the lessons of history. If a "power vacuum" actually existed, the natural right to fill that vacuum rests with the littoral states and not powers external to the region. On the other hand, the external powers, in the process of filling that "power vacuum" must of necessity then seek linkages, bases, facilities and access to facilities in the region, thus aggravating instabilities and worsening security environment of the region.

Another argument, fundamental to the debate, is based on economic issues : access to natural resources (especially oil), scarce metals and minerals and uninterrupted supply of these resources necessary for the Western industrialised world. In this connection Soviet threat is perceived to loom large : and freedom and security of the sea-lanes becomes an important ingredient of the argument. Here again, it would be necessary to separate the chaff from the wheat : and look at the basic facts to arrive at objective understanding of the issues involved. To cite but one example, the spectre of Western (and Japanese) dependence on West Asian oil and the prospect of its denial to the West is held out as the justification for formidable military presence in NW Indian Ocean (2 aircraft carriers, 18-20 warships with 2000 marines, 3-5 nuclear-powered submarines belonging to the United States alone, besides the warships of France, UK and other friendly countries). The facts are that : oil supplies were *stopped* by one country for a period of one week; they were *disrupted* after the oil embargo of 1973 and now of some extent, with the sinking of oil tankers in the Persian Gulf. The point to note is that all these cases were the direct fall-out of Western strategies, whether of creating favourable geo-political structures (as in Iran) or due to supply of weapons prolonging the Iran-Iraq war. In fact the countries which have suffered economically on account of disruption of the flow of resources to the developed countries on account of a conflict inevitably are the littoral countries themselves : Egypt after

the closure of Suez Canal, Iran and Iraq due to their continuing war and so on. The assured movement of resources, therefore, is of greater importance for the developing countries. The argument of the need for military presence to safeguard freedom of navigation is equally untenable : as the recent experience in Persian Gulf/Red Sea prove. The reality is that the geopolitical situation in the Indian Ocean is governed more by the paradigms of superpower strategies rather than any of their declarative policies.

SUPERPOWER STRATEGIES

Super-power strategies may be seen to operate at two levels : one at the inter-superpower level, and the second at the superpower—Third World level. In this context, there is a great degree of parallelism between the strategies of the two superpowers; with the Soviet strategy being a reactive one, with its policy options based more on responses to U.S. initiatives. The scope of Soviet strategy is comparatively limited. However, it is important to remember that this limitation is more as a result of Soviet handicaps in strategic mobility and naval-air power projection capabilities as compared to the US, rather than any benevolence *per-se*. To understand the anatomy of superpower strategies, therefore, it would be necessary to understand the U.S. strategy : especially as it relates to the Indian Ocean region.

Taking the second level of superpower—Third World level first, it is patently clear, both from historical evidence as well as strategic thought and literature, that the strategy seeks to obtain greater control and influence over the Third World, the bulk of which constitutes the Indian Ocean region. What is of great significance is that the US appears to be reshaping its strategy so as to seek greater co-operation and collaboration of Western developed powers, thus increasing the pay-offs, legitimacy and effectiveness, and reducing costs (especially political) of unilateral approach which it was forced to adopt in the Vietnam War era. The basic ingredients of this strategy are : co-ercive diplomacy and selective interventionism. And the objective : to control and influence the World's politico-economic order and "harmonise" it with its own interests. The historical facts supporting this thesis are :

- Increasing frequency of intervention by the developed countries in the Third World affairs : with the U.S. standing out as the major intervenor.
- Establishment and proliferation of Rapid Deployment Forces since 1977 with the stated policy objectives of intervention, primarily in Third World.

- Quantum increase in the US employment of force for coercive diplomacy without war especially since the advent of the second Cold War (from 4.4 incidents/year during 1966-77 to 7.2 incidents/year in 1978-84).
- US employment of force in the Indian Ocean littoral has more than doubled since the second Cold War started as compared to the previous three decades.

There is no doubt that this strategy contributes to the overall conflict and competition at the inter-superpower level, especially as it seeks to exploit areas of US superiority over the Soviets : in strategic mobility, technology and power projection capabilities. Any discussion of the superpower role in the Indian Ocean region, therefore, must penetrate the mythology surrounding the realities of geo-political imperatives and great power interests.

STRATEGIC WARFARE

There is a new dimension to US strategy in the Indian Ocean region which will require serious study and monitoring in the years ahead : that is the importance of Indian Ocean in strategic warfare. Here it would be useful to study more carefully President Reagan's thrust for the new Space Defence Initiative—popularly called the "star wars" strategy. Two issues are pertinent in this regard. Firstly the superpowers have come to rely heavily on satellites, not only for conventional warfare, but also for a nuclear conflict. Military uses of satellites today include:

- photo-reconnaissance, with remarkable capabilities
- communication; with 70-80 per cent of communication being routed through satellites
- electronic surveillance and intelligence gathering
- ocean surveillance
- navigation, meteorology etc, and
- early warning, of a nuclear attack, where the use of satellites has made it possible to get a reaction time of 30 mts or so in case of ICBM attack.

Satellites constitute a vital ingredient, but at the same time the most vulnerable of the structure for space warfare. They provide command, control, communication and intelligence (C³I) functions in a

highly sophisticated war-making process. Non-availability of satellites with one superpower could seriously degrade its capability to conduct a nuclear war, and even impose serious handicaps in a conventional war. Satellites, therefore, may be deemed to be prime and preferred targets in any nuclear war. Four broad ingredients would be necessary to conduct successful anti-satellite (ASAT) operations:

- surveillance providing precise location and movement of satellites;
- effective interception means and method;
- command and control infrastructure to integrate the above two functions; and most important of all,
- capability for simultaneous successful ASAT operation all round the globe since ASAT operation would be highly *time-critical* because:
 - at any one time satellites would be over different parts of the globe and time delays of upto 90 mts may occur if ASAT operations are not global in characteristic.
 - an ASAT offensive may be expected to almost certainly trigger a nuclear retaliation.

Soviet satellites have three distinct characteristics:

- Their lower orbits as compared to US satellites
- The highly elliptical orbits of their early warning and communication satellites, with their perigees over the southern hemisphere
- ASAT development is based on “interceptor-satellite” technology where the interceptor satellite has to make more than one orbit before interception, thus leaving it as vulnerable as any other satellite in the process.

The United States is puruing a number of approaches in ASAT technology: but the most promising and one likely to be operationally deployable by 1987 is the one based on air-launched ASAT missile using homing interceptor technology (HIT). This is basically an ASAT-missile launched from the USAF's F-15 *Eagle* fighter: and the missile has already been test-fired against a spatial target on January 21, 1984. The missile is fitted with a miniature homing vehicle with infra-red sensors to home it for a direct impact with the satellites. This ASAT system can intercept most of the Soviet satellites in the southern hemisphere (except the other low-orbital satellites which can be intercepted over USA, Europe, Japan etc) The United States

may find it difficult to obtain adequate number of bases for F-15 launch in southern hemisphere: and any significant move to redeploy F-15 aircraft may warn the Soviets of an impending attack. But there appears to be no reason why the US Navy's carrier-borne, F-14 *Tomcat* fighter cannot be modified for this role. (NATO's *Tornados* are already under consideration for this role). The air-launched ASAT, deployed aboard aircraft carriers, would provide tremendous flexibility to the U.S. especially in the southern hemisphere where they need it the most. In this context, US plans to increase the size of its aircraft carrier (from 13 to 15) before the end of this decade becomes even more relevant. The ASAT missile, fitted on a *Minuteman* or *Trident-1* missile booster could be used to destroy satellites at altitudes of 24,000 km. And the main advantage in this approach to ASAT capability is that the system is based on existing, well-tested, well-tried sub-systems.

The other ingredients of ASAT strategy are well on their way to completion:

—the ground-based electro-optical deep surveillance system (GEOODSS) with the capability to detect a target the size of a dinner plate at 40,000 km altitude: construction of the fourth surveillance laboratory commenced early this year at Diego Garcia, to be completed in 1985.

—USAF Space Command set up its 1st wing in 1983 for management of space surveillance; and the 2nd wing will be activated in 1985 as the Space Operations Centre for command and control functions.

US ASAT strategy must be seen in the context of the fact that the Indian Ocean occupies nearly one third of the southern hemisphere (the region of greatest vulnerability of Soviet satellites); and besides Diego Garcia with its 12,000ft long airfield, the United States has access to many facilities in the region. French islands in the Indian Ocean are also factors to be taken note of, besides the existence of pro-US Australia and South Africa.

A second dimension of US strategic warfare is that of Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD). The optimum BMD would aim to destroy the hostile ICBM/SLBM during its boost phase (that is, approximately 5-6 minutes for present Soviet ballistic missiles). One option is to employ "pop-up" interceptor missiles which can explode a small nuclear device around 1000 km altitude with X-ray laser from the explosion

being focussed on the hostile ICBM (4000 Km away). Simple calculations would show that to target the main Soviet ICBM silos, such interceptor missiles will have to be launched from submarines deployed in the Arabian Sea. The establishment of US Cent Com with its headquarters planned for Masirah/Oman may carry greater meaning than discernible on surface.

Introduction of Cruise missiles would only complicate the strategic situation further.

Soviet strategies tend to be more in the nature of p responses in view of their limited capabilities. But its strategy vis-a-vis the Third World exhibits a degree of parallelism with that of the United States. At no stage does it appear to be posing a challenge of US supremacy in the region: yet plans are believed to exist of a greater order. Meanwhile its 10-odd combat ship presence in the Indian Ocean, however transient in nature, provides it status and capability for control and influence in the Indian Ocean and its littoral at minimal investment and maximum pay-offs. Here, it may also be relevant to mention China whose presence, especially in the upper reaches of the Indian Ocean may be necessary to exploit a second-strike nuclear capability with SLBMs against the Soviet Union. Qualitative changes in Chinese relations with the northern Indian Ocean littoral countries (with exception of India) since the late 1960s deserve to be monitored with care.

ARMS CONTROL

The realities of geo-political and geo-strategic imperatives inspire little confidence in the Indian Ocean region remaining a zone of peace: and everything in fact points towards an ever increasing possibility of its being instead a *zone of conflict*. This raises the stakes and premium on arms control and regional co-operation. The fact that efforts at arms control in the region, like that of non-nuclearisation of the Indian Ocean, or the Zone of Peace proposal, which did reach a high point in President Carter's proposal in March, 1977 of demilitarisation of the Indian Ocean, or even the Naval Arms Limitation Talks have not yielded any concrete results only reinforces the magnitude of the problem. In the light of the fact that the US has established (and is expanding) elaborate infrastructure for military forces, it would be naive to expect that the US would dismantle them without the Soviet Union matching a corresponding reduction in arms or strategic footholds either in the Indian Ocean or somewhere else where the US has vital interests threatened by analogous Soviet

actions. The US also perceives the deep oceans and outer-space as the new frontiers, exploitation of which is likely to have a major impact on geo-political perspectives of states and their policies. With its inherent superiority in science and technology related to these new frontiers, it may be expected to take every step to exercise control over the Indian Ocean, and the air space above it. And so long as the US perception of international system is that it must manage it by itself, for itself, and the entire developing world is a mere object of competition between the two superpowers, a realistic arms control system in the Indian Ocean region may be difficult. And as long as the Soviet Union perceives US moves in the region as aimed at its vital interests in its strategic soft, vulnerable underbelly, the problems of arms control aggravate further. All the same, efforts must continue towards arms control in the region: and perhaps it may be easier to search for a way out if all the imperatives impinging on the issue are scrutinised carefully and understood clearly.

REGIONAL CO-OPERATION

The dangers of increasing militarisation, presence of external forces and the incentives against arms control agreements all combine to worsen the security environment of Indian Ocean region. This could operate as a strong factor in retarding the progress of development in the Third World countries of the region and increase their instabilities and vulnerabilities. In the problem also may lie the seeds of the solution for the littoral states.

Security considerations and self-reliance for any littoral state in this scenario can only come about by internal strength and stability, economic development and self-reliance, and a naval strategy to provide effective and credible sea power to defend and safeguard national interests. The problem with attempts to increase naval strength and enhance national sea power is that insecurities, or images of insecurities may be created in neighbouring countries. The policy options which merit serious consideration in this regard are: an encouragement for all littoral states to adopt strategy of self-reliant sea power: adoption of low-profile low-visibility strategies in the process of building up of sea power etc. The latter option could rely on, say, a greater emphasis on sub-surface systems of sea power and reliance on land-based air power to support naval strategy, which may increase the cost of intervention by external or even other regional forces without by itself threatening the regional countries.

In the realm of collective approach, suggestions for a Naval

Police Force, especially under the aegis of the United Nations have been made in some quarters. This is bound to prove counter-productive and inimical to the interests of the littoral states which can only be best served by withdrawal of external forces from the Indian Ocean. Any UN Naval Police Force would, at best, regularise and legitimise the presence of external forces in the Indian Ocean, especially those belonging to superpowers, and at worst, seriously inhibit or threaten national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the littoral states. Co-operation in cultural, economic and political fields is a prerequisite for co-operation in military fields, especially when a common base for threat perceptions does not exist.

At present the only approach to improve the security environment of the Indian Ocean region and reverse the trend towards its turning into a zone of conflict must have its roots in the UN Charter and seek to restrict and finally remove unilateral assumption of "police-men" roles by external powers. The ultimate objective must remain the withdrawal of external forces from the Indian Ocean: and as a first step, it would be logical to seek limitation/"freezing" of external naval-air forces followed by withdrawals. But even more important is to understand the true nature of the geo-political/geo-strategic imperatives impelling superpower rivalries and competitions in the region so that policy options in relation to naval strategy can be worked out by the littoral states. Notwithstanding the uncertainties of the pay-offs of any of the strategies and options adopted by the littoral states, one thing is certain: there is no option for these states but to strengthen their sea power and be self-reliant in seeking to protect their vital interests.

Generalship in the Modern Age

MAJOR GENERAL SATINDER SINGH

Lord Wavell once wrote a dissertation on 'Generalship'. This was related to a much slower era. The instant communications that now exist had not yet been developed. This, together with distance, gave generals much more latitude in the conduct of their wars than is the case today. In referring to generals one must define this rank as one that not only encompasses the highest in the army but also in the other services. Thus though admirals and air marshals are not mentioned specifically they are also covered in this article. After all the art of generalship, if there is any such thing, applies equally to all the three services. Returning to modern conditions it is clearly evident that governments wish to exercise more direct control over operations than they once did. During the Second World War Mr Churchill laid down the system of such direction by constantly seeking information and wishing to directly decide the scope and conduct of operations in all the theatres where British forces were operating. Of course the political control of war began to raise itself during the First World War when the generals on the Western Front in France unnecessarily threw away lives to the consternation and disapproval of the electorate. It was Clemenceau who is then reported to have said that 'war was too serious a business to be left to the generals.' Hence political control and, if one can use this word, interference became preponderant in the life of the armed forces. With the advent of immediate and massive destruction which the nuclear weapon can do the command to unleash this now lies firmly with the political leadership, hence the black box which an aide constantly carries around wherever the US President goes. One could well say that the increasing blood-thirstiness in the conduct of operations is due to civilian control, thereby indicating the control by the politician. The use of the nuclear bomb on Japan was a civil decision. So was the massive bombing offensive on Germany which really had little effect on the successful prosecution of the war. The refusal to face reality in the mass killing of the Jews, by political leaders in the West enabled the Nazis to carry out their intentions to try and wipe out this community from the face of Europe. But this is besides the point. Whether civilian control is liked or not it is now a fact of life and generals or their equivalents in the other services have to accept this. If they have greater ambitions they can always try to emulate the many countries where military rule has ousted the politi-

cians. They may however find that they cannot do this in a country like India where the proportion of servicemen even when augmented by ex-servicemen, is much less than it is in Pakistan. To establish military rule the cooperation of the civil services is a must. Even in Pakistan it would not have been possible to replace the politicians without active connivance by these elements. The traditional rivalry between the civil servant and the services impedes such an understanding. And then there is a large community of people for whom the present system is convenient and they would not accept a military government for much time. For this reason the rules of the game have to be acknowledged. Generals have to function within the system. In this case many of them have had experience in Services' HQ and understand the rules. For some of the others who have come more or less directly from lower military commands the impact of the political and bureaucratic jungle is bewildering. It is this aspect which will be touched on more than the purely military one.

But first of all let us see the qualities of a military nature which the general must have. Professionally he must be competent enough to understand the deployment of a field formation like a division in the army a fleet in the navy and a station in the IAF. As he goes higher there is more professional assistance by a competent staff. But he must have the commonsense to quickly evaluate proposals put up to him and select a course which is the most practical one. This professional advice must come from aides whom he trusts and who require little or no supervision. During wartime it was common for the general in all the combatant countries to select a team that thereafter accompanied them throughout the hostilities. In the USSR it was common for Stalin to have a team which was responsible for conducting all offensive operations against the Germans. Eisenhower, Monty and many others had similar arrangements. While the former functioned on what seems to be a committee basis, the latter gave his own directives but relied on his underlings to translate these into action. Since he had the utmost confidence in these staff officers he could concentrate on the conduct of the operation and future planning. The selection of subordinates is therefore one of the important qualities of generalship. While loyalty may be the most important condition it is necessary that they have the requisite professional ability. These two factors have therefore to be carefully balanced. Theatre commanders also need a friend in court, as it were, if they are to function without interference. Monty had Allanbrook. The latter acted as a shield which protected Monty from the constant interference for which Mr Churchill was noted. In peace the right contacts both within the service and amongst the politicians and bureaucrats is extremely helpful. In the Indian scene both Kaul

and Manekshaw had the backing of their political chiefs, Nehru and Mrs Gandhi. This enabled Kaul to more or less take over the control of the army from the then COAS. Unfortunately he lacked the professional acumen to be able to take advantage of the support that he unreservedly obtained from the Prime Minister. Though he was surrounded by competent staff officers he failed to make use of them properly while they seemed to fear him. This together with Mr Nehru's unsophistication in matters led to the debacle of 1962 against the Chinese. The better orchestration of all resources in the 1971 War against Pakistan was due to the competence of the Service Chiefs and a better political understanding at the highest level in the person of Mrs Gandhi.

Since one has entered the political sphere it would be well to examine this. In the ambience of the Service HQ in Delhi the general can leave much of the day-to-day routine to the PSOs. What he needs is the perception of knowing when to press a point with his bureaucratic peers or his political bosses. Timing is vital at this level. Of the two the bureaucrats are more formidable since they have been in their posts generally for some length of time. They have quashed many proposals and have the reasons for doing so pat on their finger tips. If the general has political support at the highest level he could well ride roughshod over any opposition. This does not serve in the long run. May be a military reputation could enable one to carry this off without any great resentment, as Monty was able to do during his tenure as the head of the British army after the war. But his was a rare case. Those on whose toes one has stepped will one day take their revenge, even if this seems petty. The bureaucrats in particular have long memories and thin skins. Politicians also can not be slighted without having to pay the price for this in the end. The general must therefore be conscious of this. He has to know when to give in and when to try and force his point across. For the latter, as stated before, there is the need for correct timing. There is also the need to put across one's point of view without causing offence and for the practice in the art of persuasion. All this is much more difficult in peacetime than it is in wartime. The general in peacetime must know the art of lobbying to get the support he needs to get his proposals through. He must be articulate both on paper and by word of mouth. Of these two the latter is the most important because written proposals can always be prepared by the staff. Though honesty and frankness is respected and can often disarm opposition it may always not be the most adequate quality needed to operate in the highest levels. It may be necessary to dissemble with a view to prevent a premature disclosure of one's hand. It may also be necessary to be ambiguous so that one can back out from an untenable situation should it arise. Service heads used to immediate disposal of

problems at the lower level have to acclimatise themselves to the slow and laborious system that prevails in the Delhi ambient. A sense of humor is vital if one is to survive. While courage particularly physical is a must in command of troops prudence is a greater quality at the level of Service Chief. This added to patience would be the most necessary qualities when operating in Delhi.

The above recitation will indicate that the general has to become in a sense a politician if he is to act efficiently and achieve any aim or objective worth his while. It must be remembered however that the powers-that-be often fear the intrusion of a person as head of a service if he knows his way through the bureaucratic maze. In a recent case the claims of an officer who knew the ropes were rejected on this score, and he was not appointed the head of the service. For this reason it may be better for a candidate to give the impression that he is unaware of the ways of the top bureaucracy. Thus a martial appearance with a bluff exterior concealing a shrewd mind would seem to be the best.

On the military side of the business while selecting subordinates is vital, it is also necessary to remain free of prejudice when examining the cases of promotion of those whom he may have known in the past. Prejudice is not easy to forget but a great man will not stoop to pettiness in dealing with officers careers.

In wartime it is necessary not to be unduly disturbed by reverses. Determination to attain the aim must be followed through flexible means. Channels of command must be followed. There has been an increasing tendency to by-pass subordinates next in the chain of command and deal with staff officers. This is a form of disloyalty and it fosters this lower down as well. If the general lacks confidence in a subordinate he should be removed. In India's short wars replacement may not be easily forthcoming. The subordinate has to be accepted for what he is. By-passing him will only result in a loss of mutual confidence which could hinder the development of operations. It also demonstrates a lack of leadership qualities in the general in that he feels that he is unable to get action or results from his direct subordinates. The constant harassment of lower formations in the search for news is not correct as it takes up much time of lower staffs away from the conduct of the war. If necessary there should be the establishment of special staff officers deputed by the Service HQ for direct transmission of important information. Such staff officers can be found from amongst the instructional staff not fully employed in time of hostilities.

Failures are often used to remove commanders at the lower levels. The officers concerned are not given the opportunity to seek redress. The passing of guilt to subordinates is not uncommon anywhere in the world. It is not however a good custom. The general may be strict but he must also be fair. One need not protect or shield the guilty but one must defend the innocent. And one should be considered innocent unless proved otherwise.

Then what are the qualities of a general. He must be shrewd enough to survive in the political and bureaucratic ambience of Delhi. He must have sufficient professional ability to select the most practical plan. He must choose with care the subordinates with whom he is to work in close harmony, and then give them sufficient responsibility. He should have the charisma to influence his subordinate commanders or display a transparent honesty that attracts respect from them. Though he acts the politician in Delhi he must not play at politics within his service. He must be humane and he must be courageous in the running of his command responsibilities.

In this way he can serve his branch of the service and the country through good and bad times.

And last but not least he needs LUCK. A lucky general may often be more successful than a general who is better professionally.

Institute of Fire Power Management

(IFPOM)

MAJOR GENERAL PC JERATH

INTRODUCTION

IT'S a time-tested fact that a state owes its existence to the freedom and sovereignty of its country. Defence of the country, therefore, becomes state's paramount function. Undoubtedly, the best insurance for defence is to possess a viable, well equipped, quick responding and motivated armed forces. The state then utilises such an armed force to achieve its national aims and objectives.

India is no exception. It has, perforce, to maintain a force level commensurate with its vast borders to be defended and the probable adversaries to be confronted. Improved technological and scientific advancements the world over, have made it imperative that our armed forces are equally matched in sophisticated weaponry as our adversary. In the electronic era there is bound to be an induction of sophisticated weapons and ammunition systems, surveillance devices, electronic warfare equipment in our armed forces. All these systems are primarily directed at achieving maximum possible firepower which is capable of being delivered in the shortest possible time and provide flexibility in the battle-field. Cost of weapons and ammunition being prohibitive, their optimum utilisation becomes an inescapable requirement for a developing country.

In any futuristic battlefield environment, tactics and strategy are bound to be guided by firepower and mobility. We, too, are making positive advances in this field and in days to come, we will be possessing a creditable deterrent firepower. Firepower to be of decisive value, has to be destructive and devastating. Firepower encompasses every weapon from the smallest calibre to the largest including rockets and missiles which has to be delivered to support land armies. The scientific knowledge of modern technology for automation has evolved techniques for controlling wide ranging weapons. These techniques will further get complicated in time to come. Hence Fire Power Management of a vast arsenal of weapon systems assumes prime significance. We will also have to develop the expertise in fire control management by means of advanced electronics and computerisation.

The Fire Power Management in the Army can be greatly assisted by our scientists and engineers which they are already doing to some extent but without coordinated and without proper conceptual directions from users. In fact, they will have a vital role to play in its progressive development of new weapon systems as required by users and offer dynamic weapon systems to give a new vision to battlefield fire-power environment. Thus we need a high powered "Think tank" probably in the shape of an Institute of Fire Power Management to guide the affairs connected with firepower as well as develop scientific, in particular, electronic expertise in our country, capable of tackling more and more complicated fire support problems. Our country will be fully justified in setting up such an institute on national basis to assist the Armed Forces, in particular, the Land Army, to carry out one of its primary functions in the future battle fields.

It is proposed to ponder over this thought of establishing an Institute on national basis in our country which will develop and promote an expertise in Fire power Management. This subject will cover the following main aspects:—

- (a) Ingredients of Firepower Management.
- (b) Existing resources assessment.
- (c) Integration of agencies involved in Firepower Management.
- (d) Functions and location of IFPOM.
- (e) Proposed Organisation of IFPOM.

INGREDIENTS OF FIRE POWER MANAGEMENT

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

The strategic aim of our country is to create a creditable armed force whose professional competence and weaponry acts as a deterrent to our prospective adversaries. Achieving such an aim will involve possession of latest sophisticated weaponry which should be conceived and developed indigenously. Keeping in view the cost effectiveness, a developing nation like ours has to draw correct balance between economic development and defence expenditure. Once any weapon project is accepted by the Government, the effective employment of such weapons becomes its next concern. This task is delegated to the managers of the army. Therefore, weapons selection and cost effectiveness become major considerations for the Government. Thus a recurring dialogue on evaluation should exist between army managers and scientists.

TACTICAL REQUIREMENT OF FIREPOWER

Army has to translate the strategic aims of the country into tactical requirements. These tactical requirements of firepower have to be evolved keeping the following in view:

(a) *Concept of Battle*—to be considered in both defensive and offensive roles. This factor is under constant review by operational pundits of the army.

(b) *Concepts of Fire Support*—which include philosophy and policy to implement it.

(c) *Ingredients of Fire Supports*—will include all available weapons in the tactical battle area from small arms to heavy guns to rockets and missiles. It also includes the means to execute fire support demands in the battle area and measures to counter adversary's firepower.

WEAPON SELECTION AND EMPLOYMENT

Based on tactical requirements, weaponry has to be evaluated and selected. The qualitative requirements of a weapon system have to be conceived and its employment has to be identified. This would embrace concepts pertaining to scales of issue, organisation and tactical utilisation. The need for such selection emerges from concepts of battle and fire support.

SURVEILLANCE AND TARGET SELECTION

In any fast moving and swift battle, the greatest problem is the continuous surveillance of the opposing adversary from the pre-hostility period to and during active operations. Days are gone when one could not answer the question, "What is behind the Hill?" Now with electronic surveillance means, in particular aerial, one would be more confident to analyse the entire battlefield activity and keep it updated. Future surveillance devices will provide such an enormous information of our adversary that we have to provide requisite means to decipher such information. Deciphering will be followed by identification of targets demanding punishment in the order of priority. Each target will then be analysed for quantum and type of punishment it needs, duration and the type of firepower required to yield the desired results. This task will get further complicated if our adversaries attack us jointly in a number of sectors with various force levels. In such circumstances, electronic automation by computers will be inevitable.

ACCURACY OF FIRE POWER

Once the target and the weapon system have been selected, we have to thereafter ensure that the desired fire power is accurately delivered on to it. This involves evaluation of the following:

- (a) Accurate data of selected target, compatible to weapons selected for engagement.
- (b) Effect of ballistics on functioning of the weapon system.
- (c) Interfacing of surveillance means with the weapon system.

AUTOMATION OF FIRE POWER MANAGEMENT

To ensure control, management and rendering effective fire support, the following aspects need special attention—

- (a) A continuous surveillance of battle-field area with a view of target selection:
- (b) Target selection and allotment of priorities.
- (c) Degree of punishment to the target in terms of quantum of fire, type of weapons to engage, duration of engagement and type of ammunition required.
- (d) Control of fire of a large number of weapons systems.
- (e) Integration of fire power available from various sources.

Needless to say that the above sub management problems will have to be automated to achieve optimum utilisation of available fire power resources in a specific battle area.

EXISTING RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

Fire power management has been, till now, an exclusive domain of the Army with a limited involvement in the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) though having same aim, but different perceptions. This was an acceptable method of functioning when weaponry was less sophisticated and its employment least complicated. The new modernised, electronically oriented weaponry needs a more comprehensive involvement of soldiers with scientists and Engineers. If our future Army has to be self-sufficient in armaments, then users must think ahead and draw clear perceptions of battlefield and give a correct orientation to designers and planners of new weapon systems. However, in order to assess future integration of all resources,

we need to analyse the functioning of present resources concerned with Fire Power Management.

Army Complement—Fire power Management, weapon selection and concepts of their employment is the privilege of the Army. Due to limited resources and simple weaponry, it was possible to implement this task by employing human resources and analyse weapons employment and their simple sub-systems without being detrimental to its impact in battlefield. Now with sophisticated weaponry, the Fire Power Management demands an expertise to achieve cost effectiveness in employment of costlier weapon systems. The firepower management has now become an art and science and Army has to get down more seriously to tackle this aspect.

DRDO. Army has been gradually involving DRDO in Fire Power Management in the following spheres :—

- (a) Research and Development of new weapon systems by Electronic Research and Development Establishment, Armament Research and Development Establishment and Vehicle Research and Development Establishment.
- (b) Carrying out studies on effectiveness of various weapon systems by PEE Balasore, ARDE and VRDE.
- (c) Checking performance of weapons by Terminal Ballistic Research Laboratory (TBRL, Chandigarh).
- (d) Research and Development of fire control instruments, radars and computers by ECIL, HAL, BEL and TIFR.

The approach of DRDO at present is well meaning but it is not a balanced step towards self-sufficiency. These agencies are well equipped and have necessary manpower and each one by themselves is powerful, but lack of orientation and direction in a coordinated manner. Their philosophy is to develop a weapon system ab initio to gain basic competence or adopt reverse engineering techniques of foreign counterparts. With such an approach they no doubt have gained experience though at expense of user but still stagger behind in technology by two decades. If we have to be self-sufficient in armament then we have to jump in technology while keeping the futuristic conceptual user requirement in view. This direction has to be given by the user's in a motivated atmosphere of Soldier and Scientist.

From the foregoing, it is evident that the development of an expertise on Fire Power Management has not received the attention it deserves. It will be prudent to mention that at present General Staff Qualitative Requirement (GSQR) takes anything from 2 to 3 years, for formulization of a weapon system while a prototype trial model is not available for the next 6 to 7 years, by the time user requirements and technology may change. We are now in the era of modernising our Army and hence such expertise is all the more vital. An integrated approach by user and scientists is thus obvious by a high powered Institute which lays down the concepts of perspective planning of Fire Power Management and its cost effective utilization in the battlefield.

INTEGRATION OF FIRE POWER MANAGEMENT AGENCIES

Field Work. Fire Power Management involves research and evolution of philosophies and systems directed towards optimum utilization of fire power. To fulfil such a function, some field work involving scientific testing of weapons for their battle effects needs to be carried out. This task could well be entrusted to Terminal Ballistic Research Laboratory, Chandigarh as hitherto or later on extended to the location of IFPOM.

Research and Studies. The strategic and tactical studies of Army have to be translated into suitable weapon systems and fire power automation systems. This scientific analysis and evaluation needs integration of scientists and engineers with the Users, so that comprehensive user-oriented project papers are evolved. This in turn will ensure planned progressive evolution of effective weapon systems and their employment in the battlefield areas.

FUNCTIONS AND LOCATION OF IFPOM

AIM

The aim of this Institute of Fire Power Management will, therefore, be as under :—

“To evolve and review firepower concepts and weapon systems for the Army and also assist the Army in implementation and management of such concepts and systems.”

FUNCTIONS

The detailed functions of IFPOM would be as follows :—

- (a) To prepare research papers on the Fire Power Management projects.
- (b) To develop a scientific base on all aspects of fire power problems.
- (c) To evolve cost effective weapon systems.
- (d) To evaluate and analyse the field trials conducted for the purpose of checking performance of weapons.
- (e) To improve efficiency of weapon employment.
- (f) To integrate functioning of all agencies connected with Fire Power Management.
- (g) To suggest new systems for fire control automation.
- (h) To train scholars in Fire Power Management.
- (j) To undertake specific tasks concerning IFPOM from institutions involved in development/production.

An Institute for the envisaged task, having a tremendous bearing on user requirements, should be based on an already existing Institute concerned with fire power. The major component of Army's fire power is ARTILLERY in direct role, while tanks and small arms as direct weapon systems. In fact, all fire power is built around the artillery. The inbuilt flexibility, concentration of fire, destructive capability and speedy response enables the artillery to dictate decisions in war. Artillery in the world armies, in particular those of USSR and China who have mastered the technique of mass employment of artillery as a weapon of decision, bear testimony to this fact.

It would, therefore, be logical to conclude that an Institute of this nature should find its rightful place at the School of Artillery Deolali (Maharashtra). Incidentally a well organised Weapons Trial and Evaluation Wing already exists at Deolali. This IFPOM would be the most important adjunct of the School of Artillery which is considered as Mecca for Fire Power in the Army. From here the Soldier, Scientist and the Engineer will provide a new vision to the concepts of fire power and its management.

Initially, TIFR Bombay could act as the supporting laboratory for research since it has some experience in such tasks. Later, the IFPOM

at Deolali could be an autonomous body, self contained in terms of Research, Library, Laboratories and essential wherewithals for evaluation.

ORGANISATION OF IFPOM

The functions of the IFPOM are primarily User oriented. Hence an integrated organisation of users (Artillery, Armour and Infantry) Scientist and Engineers should be developed. The organisation should have following basic wings concerning

- (a) Strategic and Tactical Concepts,
- (b) Weapons evaluation and Selection,
- (c) Fire Control Automation,
- (d) Fire Power Management,
- (e) Coordination, Control and Administration,
- (f) Library,
- (g) Research and Laboratories,
- (h) Field Trials, and
- (j) Training of Scholars.

CONCLUSION

An unquestionable necessity exists for establishing an Institute which will be responsible for evolution and implementation of fire power concepts at the national level. Presently, the various resources concerned with fire power are, for all purposes, working independently with the result major portion of their potential remains unharnessed. It is necessary to channelise their potential to fruitful gains in the battlefield which the future so greatly demands. The IFPOM meets this necessity and therefore should be established to give the integrated approach to futuristic weapon system, its management and development in a user conceptual manner to meet our goals of "self-sufficiency" in twenty-first century.

Codification of Defence Inventory— The Virgin Peak

BRIG A. S. BHULLAR

INTRODUCTION

In the mountaineering field there is hardly a virgin peak. All have been climbed as the result of the indomitable spirit of the climbers. The same is not true of the Defence Management field. Codification of Defence inventory is still an unfinished and unaccomplished task. The attempt on it started with the formation of Defence Cataloguing Authority (DCA) vide Ministry of Defence letter No. 865/1/Std Sec H/5850 (Admin) dated 29 June 1959. Initially it worked under the Director of Inspection (Armaments). Later, in 1965 the DCA was merged with the Directorate of Standardisation. The responsibility, therefore, rests with Dte of Standardisation. The mechanism for getting the job completed is through the Defence Equipment Codification Committee now chaired by Joint Secretary (Inspection), Ministry of Defence. This paper discusses the importance of the work, the work content of the task, and what needs to be done about this activity.

THE OFFICIAL STAND

THE official stand on codification of Defence Inventory is clearly enunciated in the Standardisation Directive dated 5 Oct 1977 issued by the Ministry of Defence. Two relevant extracts can be quoted here :

- (a) Services Inventory shall be codified and catalogued under the Defence Stores Cataloguing System. This will provide a uniform supply language for the three services. (Para 5(e) of Standardisation Directive dated 5 Oct 1977 refers).
- (b) "Entry Control" through Standardisation shall be planned and implemented for preventing variety of items from entering the supply system. (Para 5(c) of Standardisation Directive dated 5 Oct. 1977 refers).

The various systems of cataloguing and codification were studied by the Defence Equipment Cataloguing Committee. In a meeting held on 10 March 1960, under the chairmanship of Brig R G Williams, Director of Inspection (Armaments), a decision was taken to adopt the NATO system. Since then we have been following this system. The aspect of "Entry Control" is directly linked with codification. All new items are to be checked against the existing codified items. Hence entry control is an automatic inherent step in codification. The only thing necessary, of course, is to first have our Data Base complete. And, herein lies the rub. The Data Base for the complete Defence inventory is not there, the virgin peak we have been referring to so far.

THE PRESENT POSITION

The purpose of this paper is not to discuss the dry mechanics of codification. We would rather deliberate on certain mis-conceptions and doubts which have cropped up about this subject from time to time. The readers wanting to know about the mechanics of codification may please refer Appendix 'A'. Before we proceed further with discussion of the misconceptions and doubts, it will be appropriate to give the present position of the codification of Defence inventory.

Present Estimated Defence inventory	—	25-30 lakhs
Items codified so far	—	
Items put on computer media	—	

Hence we can see that we have barely scratched the surface of the problem. A lot needs to be done. The present capacity of the Dte of Standardisation is to handle 35,000 items per year. This is proposed to be raised to one lakh items a year after the additional manpower is positioned.

Further discussion on the subject will be undertaken under the following headings:

- (a) Why codification
- (b) The nomenclature confrontation
- (c) The lack of data
- (d) The unified AHSP concept
- (e) The pace and quality
- (f) The DCA (UK) example

WHY CODIFICATION

This is the most recurring question. "Why have codification at all?" One manufacturer of aircraft in Britain has a certain system for his part-list. Why not accept it? If it differs from the system being used by the French Aircraft manufacturers, it does not matter. For getting items from the French party, use his Illustrated Part-List. Of course, the HAL will have their own system. Same happens for Naval ships and boats and the Army tanks and guns. We now get a multiplicity of codification systems. The usual plea is, "After all, my system is peculiar to my equipment right down to nuts, bolts, gaskets, cables, electric items. Why should any one else know about its reference?" Another misconception heard quite often is—"compared to the effort needed to convert the existing part numbers to the DS Gat Number, there will hardly be any gain. After all what are you doing, except replacing one part number with another".

The multiplicity creates confusion, item proliferation, duplication, increase in inventory holdings, greater burden on inventory carrying and handling costs etc. The reasons are all well known. For the sceptic we may enumerate the advantages of codification as given below :—

- (a) We get a uniform pattern of item numbering in all the three Services.
- (b) Since the number will be unique numbers given by DCA, a unique identification is obtained.
- (c) As a result of (a) and (b) we now get a common supply language in all the three services for exchange of information and data.
- (d) The codified data base can now be used for performing the following important standardisation activities:
 - (i) *Rationalisation and Variety reduction*—Unwanted items could be deleted.
 - (ii) *Commonality and equation*—Items found common could be merged.
 - (iii) *Entry Control*—Close scrutiny of all new items against existing codified items to ensure that duplicate items are not introduced in service.
- (e) Catalogue of Defence Stores could be published which would enable DRDO to use standardised items in their future design as far as possible.

The cardinal encyclical is that unless a codified data base of Defence inventory is first available, we cannot even commence the serious standardisation activities of rationalisation, variety reduction, entry control etc. Codification is the FIRST IMPORTANT STEP towards any substantial and useful standardisation effort. It is like the flour and bread relationship. Before you can have the bread of standardisation, we have to first obtain the flour of codification.

The basis resistance to codification items from the following causes—

- (a) It involves additional effort from the users agencies. People have to be trained, earmarked for this job and continuous flow of data established.
- (b) The existing familiar system has to be discarded. People are used to a system now in the interest of standardisation, they have to accept and get used to another system.
- (c) Motivation is lacking. The actual people on the ground still have a doubt about the codification being of any help.

The only thing which can be said about the difficulties is that they have to be faced in the interest of standardisation. STANDARDISATION SAVES. To do standardisation we have to first create a data base by codification. For that matter, nothing is achieved in any field without some additional effort. This paper is to convince the reader that the effort requested from the various agencies is worthwhile and will definitely be productive in terms of simplification and cost savings.

This is not to belittle the valid comment that some areas are likely to bring in more savings than others. For example, the areas of general stores, common electrical and electronic items, vehicles, general purpose tools and equipment, materials, metals are more amendable for standardisation. These should be codified first. Exclusive items such as aircraft, naval boats, special weapons, low propulsion items such as test equipments, dynamometers, special purpose machines, flight simulators, driving simulators etc can be codified later. Notwithstanding these observations, it is advantageous to have a central clearing house for all costly and special equipments of the services. Whichever way you look at it codification has a useful purpose for Defence inventory-management.

THE NOMENCLATURE CONFRONTATION

Once we start codifying Defence items, the greatest controversy is

caused by the 'nomenclature' of the item. The system adopted requires that the nomenclature follows the rule-item name first, followed by first modifier, followed by second modifier and so on. Incidentally such a nomenclature system is a must for the various computer programmes. The computer programme can now be made to first scan the item name, latter the first modifier and then the second modifier and so on. If we did not have this system, the computer programmes to handle the data would be almost impossible. So both from the view point of having a standard nomenclature and for making it amenable for computer handling, this system is excellent.

The users and other technical agencies, however, have difficulty with some of the already introduced items. They get used to a certain nomenclature and are unwilling or reluctant to change to the standardised form. The often quoted example is in the 'Dust Extractor Motor'. The item name 'motor' should precede the rest of the nomenclature. Then we have some very special item names which are peculiar to our services such as *Tava*, *Parat* etc. Where the service concerned is used to a particular nomenclature, they would retain it in brackets AFTER the standard nomenclature. Also the extreme method of having the complete item description in the nomenclature should be avoided. This could be separately entered in the various documents such as MPT Cards, Illustrated Part-Lists, drawings etc. The official standardised 'Item Name' should be as brief as possible. Other details could be recorded in the other miscellaneous detail base handings.

ARSP and technical agencies should realise the importance of having a standardised nomenclature for computer handling. It is just like Hindi words of command, when they were newly introduced. It took some time for people to get used to it. Now they are almost second native for every one. Those who never drilled to English words of command can not even imagine what was the difficulty in having Hindi words of command. The author wishes to state that the same is the case in respect of adopting standardised Nomenclature for Defence items. Once uniformly adopted, it will prove to be a great boon. In any case all new introductions should invariably follow the Defence Service Codification System.

THE LACK OF DATA

Another bottleneck in the codification of Defence inventory is lack of data about the items. We find series of spanners with only the part numbers being different. We also have pliers, wrenches, resistors, coils, etc. Part Number as given by manufacturer is different, but how

each one is different is not known. The usual answer is that we never had the requirement to know the difference. As long as one quoted the manufacturer's part number and asked for the item, the part was made available. This resulted in import of simple fasteners, cables, tools, gasket materials, etc. which could have been obtained indigenously. The indenting authorities and ASHSP even now continue this practice. Since details are not available, the manufacturer's part number is the only Bible to go by. Lots of general purpose items which could be obtained easily and cheaply from other sources are being procured from original manufacturers. Even from indigenous manufacturers the parts are to be obtained against their special part numbers, even when they are common general purpose items. The cost of procurement of such items is left to the imagination of the reader. It will suffice to mention that cost of procurement and multiplicated accounting and holding of such items is likely to be quite staggering.

It is the AsHSP of the three Services who should have this data with them. Some AsHSP have been raising the question that being a propriety item, the manufacturer is not bound to give us data on such items. Countries like UK, France, USA, USSR have no difficulty in such matters. All manufacturers of defence items are automatically required to follow the Defence Codifications System of the country concerned. So in our country also this can be implemented provided the indenting authorities and AsHSP stress this aspect at all times. At least a start can be made in respect of all new introductions. In this connection, the attention of the reader is invited to a suggested contractual clause, for all procurement indents as given at Appendix 'B'.

Without having details and characteristics about an item, codification is a meaningless and unfruitful activity. The whole process of equation, in lieu use, rationalisation, standardisation can be done once the details of items are available. A mere linking with the manufacturers part numbers does not serve any purpose at all. A special and concerted effort will have to be made by the AsHSP towards getting the necessary details about items of their concern. This will help both intra-service and inter-service standardisation effort.

THE UNIFIED AHSP CONCEPT

One particular group class should be dealt by one AHSP and one Depot in one service. Of course, the ideal would be to have a single Inter-Service AHSP for one class of equipment such as created for Fire Fighting Equipment. But having one AHSP to look after one group class is a must in one Service. There are some general purpose items

which are used in many equipments, such as fasteners, electrical components etc. Here, the concept of 'Main AHSP' and 'User AHSP' should be used. For example, fasteners are CIGS responsibility but may be used by CIHV, CIV, CIW, CIL etc. Bearings is another example where CIV is the main AHSP. This concept is well known and by and large followed by the Army AsHSP. The same needs to be done in the Navy and the Air Force. Summarising the recommendations we may state the following:

- (a) For one group class there should be only one AHSP in the particular Service. The Concept should be extended to the holding Depot also. It is advantageous to consolidate similar group classes in a particular AHSP/Depot.
- (b) Where item is used by more AsHSP, there is a need to nominate a single MAIN AHSP per Service. All codification documents by other AsHSP (called USER AsHSP) should be routed by them through the MAIN AHSP.

THE PACE AND QUALITY

We have seen that the codification of Defence Inventory is the responsibility of the Defence Codification Authority which is an integral part of the Dte of Standardisation. The pace of codification depends on the rate the data is fed to the DCA. From time to time, instructions are issued by the DCA for sending of this Data. We have seen that if the Data is not complete, the codification will not be useful. Hence, quite a few forms are sent back for obtaining additional data on clarifications. The AsHSP have some genuine difficulties in collecting the necessary data and answering the various queries. The basic point, however, still remains that of putting in EXTRA EFFORT by the AsHSP of the Army, Navy and Air Force to initially raise the basic codification forms and later to answer the queries raised by DCA. To mitigate some of the sufferance of the AHSP, the DCA have been sending teams to various places. Permanent detachments of the Dte of Standardisation at various nodal points are also planned. The prime responsibility of initiating the codification action will, however, still remain with the AsHSP of the three Services. The pace and quality of codification of Defence inventory will depend on the attitude and effort of the earmarked staff at various AsHSP. The DCA under the Dte of Standardisation will not be found wanting in doing their bit towards this very important task.

THE DCA (UK) EXAMPLE

The DCA (UK) spends £ 4 million on their establishment every

year. They have an approximate total strength of The estimated saving as a result of codification by DCA (UK) is £ 19 million per year. Hence every year a net saving of £ 15 million accrues to the British Exchequer, due to the activities of DCA (UK). These figures were brought by one of our officers who visited DCA (UK) for a short attachment. Similar savings are possible in INDIA also. We have, of course, a long way to go to achieve such results. The DCA (UK) have approximately 30 lakh items on their Data Base and not a single item enters the service unless cleared by DCA (UK) by allocation of the part Number. Their Data Base represents a work of about 12-15 years. Our computer has just been installed. We only have about 2 lakh items on Data Base. Hence we are still in the base camp of our peak. A tremendous effort is called for to climb the peak. All the more the need to gird up our lions and proceed, so that the virgin peak does not remain virgin for ever.

CONCLUSION

Codification is the first important step towards any serious standardisation effort. The task is huge. Benefits of codification are enormous once the codified Data Base is established. Compared to other countries, we have a long way to go in this task. The purpose of this article has been to clear some doubts and mis-conceptions about this activity. The pace and quality will depend on the active cooperation of all the technical agencies concerned, particularly, the AsHSP of the Army, Navy and the Air Force.

VIJAYNAGAR

"Joe"

VIJAYNAGAR! where is it? It is not on the Survey of India map but it does exist and came into existence by the efforts of the Assam Rifles and has remained in existence because of the Assam Rifles ex-servicemen who colonised it. This fact seems to have been forgotten and here is the story—the story of this far flung area and the forgotten men.

In the remote NE corner of India, in Tirap Frontier District of Arunachal Pradesh, there is a piece of land which juts out into North Burma in the shape of a riding boot. It is in the upper reaches of Noa Dihing river and is almost enclosed by two mountain ranges—Kumon Range in the north and Pataki Range in the south. This area, which can be aptly described as God's own country, is devoid of human habitation and had remained untouched and unadministered for various reasons. The Government had therefore very wisely decided to leave it as it was and turn it into Wild Life National Park, for it was in the words of Miller: "A forgotten world where solitude reigns supreme".

This was the scenario when India gained Independence in 1947 and in the years immediately following Independence till 1950, when China attacked Tibet and occupied it. From then onwards, our peaceful and inactive NE frontier changed into a "hot" and sensitive one. The days of "Hindi Chini Bhai Bhai" were over.

In this changed scenario the Tirap Frontier District assumed great importance and especially the area which jutted out into North Burma in the shape of a riding boot. This area touched the Kachin Hills of Burma and the Kachins, aided and abetted by the Chinese, had been in revolt against the authority of Rangoon soon after Burma won its independence. In Kachin Hills was Fort Hertz of Burma Rifles fame (in Putao area), only about 4 days march from our border and from Hertz a good fair weather road lead to the Chinese border. In the "riding boot" area there were two important passes—Chaokan in the south and Hpungan in the north. It is through these passes and especially through the former pass that both migration and invasion had taken place in the past. The Ahoms entered the Brahmaputra valley from here in the old days. Nationalist Chinese troops came down this way during the 1939-

1945 war and United States troops also operated in this area and even contemplated constructing an air base in the upper reaches of Noa Dihing side by side with the construction of Stilwell Road. However, the war with Japan ended abruptly after the dropping of atom bomb and the project was given up.

A few lines about migration in the "riding boot" area, not in the Ahom period but in comparatively recent times, by Lisus also known as Yobins. Lisu is a Chinese tribe whose original home is in Yunan province of China. In Burma, Lisus are known as Yobins in Kachin language because it is in Kachin area that most of the Lisus have now settled down. Lisu people initially migrated into Putao area of Burma located near Sino-Burma border in small numbers, sometimes during the first world war (1914-1918) owing to poverty and other economic conditions prevailing in China then. The situation became worse with the out-break of civil war between the Nationalists and the Communists in 1927 and this was further aggravated when Japan invaded China in 1937. This led to further migration. After the second world war (1939-1945), Japan surrendered and the Communists finally defeated the Nationalists and drove them away. Red China came into existence on 1 Oct 1949. The Lisus were not happy with the Communist way to life—forced labour, confiscation of property, land reforms, communes and many other restrictions on their way of living. Therefore, they made strenuous bids to escape from Red China to Kachin Hills of Burma where there were early Lisu settlers, where there was plenty of unoccupied land and an air of freedom to which they were accustomed. Here, they found their God father, an old American Missionary, Rev Mosus. He had spent decades amongst the Kachins converting them to Christianity and in turn he converted the Lisus too to Christianity.

When the Lisus found that conditions in Putao area of Burma were also getting difficult and Communists influence was spreading there also, they once again decided to migrate and this time to India. Some of them crossed the Chaokan pass and settled down in the upper reaches of Noa Dihing river. One of their earliest villages was established in about 1950 and was called by them Siddi (now re-named by us as Gandhinagar).

It was under these circumstances of twin threats—migration of foreigners into India and a powerful and aggressive China not very far away—that the Government got a jolt, woke up and decided not only to strengthen the defences in this remote area but also to colonise it. And who could do it better than the Assam Rifles? It was not an easy task

but then, easy tasks are seldom given to this Force. Three expeditions were led by the Assam Rifles to the upper reaches of Noa Dihing river where India, Tibet and Burma meet. The first two expeditions were failures but the third expedition led by Maj Gen Gureya, the then IGAR in 1961, was a success and the General was awarded the AVSM for it. A party of the Assam Rifles reached right up to the Chaokan pass—the gateway through which Khamptis and Singphas had come from Burma into India in the 18th and 19th centuries.

A brief description of the area—topography, flora, fauna, climate—would not be out of place. The area of “riding boot” is about 800 sq miles, the width being about 12 sq miles. The mountains range from 5500 ft to 12,000 ft in height and during the larger part of the year, their peaks remain snowclad and provide a Himalayan touch to the environs. The place is infested with wild animals such as tigers, elephants and bears. The rainfall averages from 120 inches to 2,000 inches annually and monsoon starts from April and goes on till September. During this period communications with the rest of India are cut off, except for an occasional IAF sortie from Mohanbari in Assam. A fair weather road, recently constructed comes upto Miao which is half way to Vijaynagar. Beyond that, there is only a foot track and the journey from Miao to Vijaynagar takes about 7 days of hard marching with not a single village or rest camp on the way. The entire area is undulating and the only other place, apart from Vijaynagar, where large scale settlement can take place is near Ghidudi in the north where another about 3000 acres of flat land is available. In this “riding boot” area, apart from Vijaynagr, there are only three villages populated by about 750 Yobins (Lisus). They are: Yudibi, Sidi (now re-named Gandhigram and the biggest village) and Chidudi. Lisus are devout Christians. They are peace loving people who neither drink nor smoke and their occupation is cultivation—paddy, millet, maize, buckwheat, pumpkins, cucumbers, green vegetables and “Kachu”. They are also very fond of poultry and keep a large number of birds. The plain area which is actually a plateau, is about 6 square miles and at an altitude of 4200 ft where the climate is cool and land fertile. The plain is such a fine creation of nature that it appears, as if bored with mountain's monotony, God said: let there be a plateau and there was a plateau. This area the Assam Rifles named it Vijaynagar and could there be a more befitting name?

The Assam Rifles opened a post there in 1961 and about two hundred AR ex-servicemen with their families were induced to move in and colonise the area. The choice fell on them because they were tough, loyal, disciplined, and dependable; they had a pioneering spirit

and an adventurous outlook; they were proficient in handling of fire arms and they were proved agriculturists. Each "settler" was given 10 acres of land and various other facilities in cash and kind to colonise the area and they have done a good job of it in the last twenty years. However, some of the major assurances given to them when they were inducted and some of the basic amenities of civilization are yet to be granted. Citizenship rights are being denied to them, free air travel to and fro from Vijaynagar has been terminated, there is no facility for them to draw their meagre pension "in situ", there is no hospital worth the name and about the Govt. school, the less said the better. Maj Gen Guraya (Retd.) ex IGAR was therefore compelled to go to the Supreme Court* on this issue and while the learned judges will give in due course their considered judgement, in all their wisdom, it would not be proper to say anything on it now.

Let this small article therefore conclude with two quotations:—

Nothing has ever been made until the soldier has
made safe the field where the building shall be built,
and the soldier is the scaffolding until it has been
built, and the soldier gets no reward but honour.

ERIC LINKLATER, Crisis in Heaven

Our God and Soldier we alike adore
Just at the brink of danger not before.
The danger past both are alike requited,
God is forgotten and the soldier slighted.

THOMAS JORDAN

* See a report in The Statesman dated 30 Nov 82.

Tales of Former Government Houses

LIEUT GENERAL S L MENEZES PVSM

IN a way, the present Rashtrapati Bhavan was the first Government House to engender my curiosity as a child, on a family outing in 1927 to the construction sites on Raisina Hill of the new Viceroy's House and the Central Secretariat. The visit had been arranged by the late Sir Sobha Singh, who was one of the major contractors of 'New' Delhi. Inevitably we were regaled with tales of Lutyens doing his reconnaissances on an elephant, the original site for New Delhi having been in the present North Delhi, generally connoted partly by the area of the Coronation Pillar, that is, north of the northern edge of the Ridge. One later learnt of Lutyens' invitations to his friends to see the future 'ruins' of 'Oozapore', these remarks being inspired variously by the heat of Delhi, and the 'wilderness' of ancient tombs around it. For those suffering from stomach trouble in New Delhi, Lutyens apparently advised he could devise a 'New Belhi'. In the construction and plan of the Viceroy's House, in the southwest wing there were two bedrooms for the Viceroy, apart from a further one for the Vicereine. Why there two should have been bedrooms for the Viceroy, I had never been able to discern. The Willingdons later solved this problem by moving to the northwest wing, and making the southwest wing available for guests.

My next contact with a Government House was at Lahore in 1942. The narration starts actually with a visit to Anarkali's Tomb, which I read had at one time been given to one of the European officers of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, General Ventura, as his residence. Before him, Prince Kharak Singh had occupied it. Thereafter one learnt that Government House, Lahore, had been the residence of General Ram Singh of the Sikh Army, having been originally built in 1635 as the tomb of Muhammad Kasim Khan, reportedly a relation of Emperor Akbar. The tomb had at one stage in British days been a kitchen, and the sarcophagus the kitchen table, though Kasim Khan may well have been buried elsewhere, as sometimes happened in that period.

The original Government House, Madras, after Independence, was handed over to the State Legislature. It was not built as a Government House initially, but as far back as 1746 belonged to a Portuguese merchant, Luis Madera, from whose widow the English bought it in 1753. It was damaged by the French during the seige of Madras in

1758-59, and was again damaged in 1767 when it was seized in a raid by Hyder Ali's troops, the then Governor and his Council escaping in a boat. In 1775, when Sir George Pigot was doing a second term as Governor of Madras, a quarrel arose between him and his Council and the Council decided to depose him, waylaid him at pistol point and kept him a prisoner at St. Thomas' Mount. Here he remained in captivity for several months. Falling seriously ill, he was brought back to the then Government House where he died, devotedly nursed by his daughter. In the early years of the 19th century it was enlarged by the then Governor, the second Baron Clive, who justified the expenditure on the grounds that it was necessary to keep up with the Nawab of Arcot, whose ancestors had been the overlords initially of the East India Company at Madras, and who had built himself a magnificent palace. The Governor's new bedroom had twelve doors and windows in order to catch the sea breeze. The Directors of the East India Company were not impressed when they heard of the cost, "It by no means appears to be essential to the wellbeing of our Government in India that the pomp, magnificence and ostentation of the Native Governments should be adopted by the former; the expense to which such a system would naturally lead must prove highly injurious to our commercial interests." Then there was Lord Connemara, who as Governor was overfond of the opposite sex. One night, Lady Connemara, the former Lady Susan Ramsay, Lord Dalhousie's daughter, no longer able to stand her husband's infidelities, fled from Government House, Madras, and took refuge at the hotel now called the Connemara. According to Mark Bence-Jones in "Palaces of the Raj" (1973), 'it is said to have so named itself in honour of having sheltered the Governor's wife.'

When Lord Wellesley arrived in Calcutta in 1798 as Governor General, he decided that the then existing Government House was unworthy of his status. It was pulled down, and the present Raj Bhavan erected on the site, which was enlarged by the purchase of adjoining properties. It was finished four years later at a cost of £63,291. The Directors of the East India Company regarded this expense as excessive, and recalled Wellesley. Wellesley described himself as 'a Bengal tiger without even a friendly jackal to soothe the severity of my thoughts', as quoted by Michael Edwardes in "Glorious Sahibs" (1968). Bence-Jones narrates a "susceptible Malay quite lost his heart to a bevy of pregnant English ladies, imagining them to be the wives of the Governor General". The General had a hathikhana of 146 elephants. Lord Dalhousie was pilloried when he replaced the existing State howdah 'of wood painted like a street cab' with one of silver. On Viceroys being able to tour by rail, the hathikhana was finally given up

in 1895. When the then Chogyal of Sikkim called on the then Prince of Wales, later King George V, the warriors accompanying him insisted on galloping their hill ponies up and down the ceremonial steps of Government House, Calcutta.

Having finished his 'palace' at Calcutta, Wellesley felt that his new house at Barrackpore should be on a no less palatial scale. He even contemplated "joining the two Government Houses (Calcutta and Barrackpore fifteen miles apart) by a straight avenue". Wellesley's second palace had only reached plinth height when the Directors recalled him as a punishment on learning of the total cost entailed in building the first (at Calcutta). They were still angrier when they heard of the Barrackpore project, which was to cost a further £50,000. The Government House, Barrackpore, had a menagerie which owed its origin to Wellesley's abortive Natural History Institute. The animals were housed in charming cages, some Gothic, others classical, and included, at various points of time, tigers, leopards, monkeys, bears, rhinoceroses, and a giraffe. The menagerie, having declined during the successive tenures of Wellesley's successor, was done away with by Lord Lytton in the later 1870s. In the grounds of the former Government House, Barrackpore, now the Police Hospital, was erected a monument to Lord William Beresford's famous racehorse, Myall King. Moored at Barrackpore till 1895, when it was done away with, was the Governor General's Boat Establishment of over 200 river craft, including the State yacht, the 'Sonamukhi', for the Governor General's state tours along the Ganga and other major rivers. Lady Canning loved Government House, Barrackpore and when she died in 1861 at the age of 44, she was buried in the garden, within sight of the Hooghly River. Her death and funeral are poignantly described by Theon Wilkinson in "Two Monsoons" (1976). Every night when he was there during his remaining months in India, her brokenhearted husband would slip silently from the house, and visit her grave, on which a light was then kept burning. He survived her less than a year, dying soon after his return to England.

When the British left India, Government House, Bombay was at Malabar Point. From 1829 to 1885, Government House, Bombay, had been at Parel, having earlier been the country retreat for Governors from 1719. Government House, Parel, was abandoned when Lady Ferguson, the wife of the then Governor, died of cholera, and the house was thereafter made into a plague research laboratory. The house was originally a Franciscan friary, and then a college of the Jesuits, who were expelled by the English in 1690, the Government House banqueting hall having been the Franciscan, and later the Jesuit,

Church at Parel. Though the Governor of Bombay kept up as much state as his colleagues at Madras and Calcutta, owing to the scarcity of horses at Bombay, his state carriage in the 18th century was pulled by a team of oxen. When Viscount Falkland, the Governor designate, and his wife disembarked at Bombay in 1848, owing to a misunderstanding there was no one to meet them. They rode to Parel in a 'hack buggy', but the sentries of Government House, Parel, refused to let them in. As Lady Falkland, the daughter of King William IV and Mrs. Jordan, recalls, "I soon showed them the way". In 1857, the Commissioner of Police decided to test the security arrangements at Government House, Parel. He succeeded in reaching the then Governor's bedside at six in the morning disguised as a sweeper. Government House Parel's most illustrious guest was deemed to be the then Prince of Wales, who, in November 1875, was greeted en route to Parel by a welcome arch which said, "Tell Mama, we're happy".

At Lucknow, after 1857, the then Chief Commissioner took up residence in a house, known as the 'Hayat Bakhsh Kothi'. It is said to have been originally used as a gun powder magazine by Major General Claude Martin. To the British in 1857, it was known as 'Bank's Bungalow' the residence of John Sherbrooke Banks, Henry Lawrence's deputy as Chief Commissioner, and later, after the latter's death in the seige of Lucknow, Lawrence's shortlived successor. The bungalow was recaptured by the British in March 1858, Banks having also been killed during the seige shortly after Lawrence. On 11 March 1858, Major William Hodson of Hodson's Horse was carried into the house wounded. He died next morning. The khaki-clad figures of Major Hodson was supposed in later years to visit the house and walk through the rooms. When the Chief Commissioner of Oudh was amalgamated in 1876 with the Lieutenant Governorship of the North Western Provinces, this house became Government House Lucknow, and was improved. When Sir Malcolm, later Lord Hailey was Governor, Lady Hailey used to pluck cannas for her guests by shooting them from the balcony with her 22, each of them with just enough stalk.

In Simla, a house named 'Peterhof' had been the Viceregal Lodge from 1864 till 1888. Lord William Beresford, the Military Secretary to five successive Viceroys, ensured, at Viceregal balls, that there was a secluded recess in which he could seat his lady of the evening. The Viceregal Lodge servants were once asked why they were arranging potted plants and curtains in such a recess. 'Kissi ke waste Lord Brasspot ke lie' was apparently the response. When the Lyttons were at 'Peterhof', they not only brought the customary French chef, but also an Italian confectioner named Peliti. The latter stayed on as a

prominent hotelier at Simla. The subsequent Viceregal Lodge up to 1947 on Observatory Hill was, in the words of Bence Jones "variously and inaccurately likened to a Scottish Hydro, a lunatic asylum, Pentonville Prison, St. Pancras Station and the mansion of a rich but tasteless German industrialist, though in fact its style was similar to that of numerous Victorian Elizabethan country houses in England, and it compared not at all badly with any of them."

When viewing the former Government Houses, we can conclude with Peter Mudford in "Birds of a Different Plumage" (1974) that "there is no place for the vanity of belief in the permanence of human greatness; but as clear a summons as anywhere in the world to the necessity for human endeavour."

Imperilled Frontiers*

(A Review Article)

BRIG K. M. BHIMAYA

"I would not like to change my roses into lilies nor my lilies into roses. Nor do I want to sacrifice my lovely orchids and rhododendrons of the hills—Verrier Elwin".

STRANGE though it may appear that a work on India's North-Eastern Frontiers should be accomplished in the academic environs of Cambridge, the author brings to bear on the book his impeccable credentials and rich repertoire of practical experience. The author is a distinguished civil servant with a consuming dedication to the economic uplift and social well being of the lot of amorphous but socially well organised tribals of the North-Eastern Frontiers. The approach is diagnostic and the conclusions patient of broader application to situations where people at different levels of material, social and economic culture come into contact with each other. The heart of the thesis lies in the root dilemma faced by India : how to regulate the pace of integration of diverse elements of peoples of the world's most populous democracy.

The purity of the motive is unexceptionable; the backlash of the pace and methods is what makes integration a nettle of complex choices and manifold pressures. The spectre of cultural aggression defies the home grown managerial techniques. At best it may perpetuate debilitating tension and at worst impose a traumatic secession—the least expected 'spin off' from the most laudable Directive Principles of our Constitution.

In a pithy but incisive introduction, the author intones that zealous frontier administrators have been interfering with the mores of the local tribals and hence inviting their instinctive resentment. They were insensitive to the tribal susceptibility to the sophisticated perversities' of our brand of civilization. To compound the problem further the necessary expertise about the needs of these people is restricted to a select elite of anthropologists, administrators and specialists. Hence, when wrongs are committed it does not arouse public conscience. The author seeks to advance an understanding of concerns and issues that are vital to the security and happiness of the people of the North-Eastern Frontier.

*Nari Rustomji, Oxford University Press 1983-pp. 153, Price Rs. 80/-.

No ethnic group can be faulted for its solicitude to maintain its cultural identity. However, when the level of dilution threatens its very survival, centrifugal forces rear their ugly heads—this applies equally to the North-Eastern Frontier. "It is moreover unjust", the author contends forcefully but convincingly that "these very regions that have been defined in the Constitution as requiring special safeguards for their economic and social survival should be subjected to population pressures which if not restrained, can only result in their cultural annihilation.

The author lambastes at once the unimaginative administrator and the wily missionary who brought about the economic exploitation and cultural degradation respectively. He laments that despite the constitutional safeguards and perspicacity of Jawaharlal Nehru who had declared unequivocally "I am not at all sure which is the better way of living, the tribal or our own. In some respects, I am quite certain theirs is better", there have been regrettable tinkering with their value system and wilful tampering of their established customs and folklore. The author also avers that it was the outsider who initiated contact with the tribals for selfish purposes. It is difficult to denigrate the contribution of the missionaries (despite their deliberate injection of secessionist overtones to the tribal body politic) purely from the philanthropic viewpoint. In material terms it has brought unprecedented enlightenment and induced scientific temper. Whether we could have let those tribals exist in contrived isolation totally insulated from the forces of science and technology, economics and social change is a moot point. The Red Indians had been deliberately confined to the wilderness of their reservations by the self-styled proponents of the most advanced democracy (USA). Have they fared better in their environs? Haven't any benefits (along with some losses perhaps) accrued to the tribals from their contact with the outsiders? These are arguable issues which the author has not addressed seriously. If he had, he would not have drawn such a dismal balance sheet of gross injustice to the tribals.

While touching upon the Naga problem, the author raises Phizo to the high pedestal of a supreme leader who has kept the flame of rebellion burning. He criticises the induction of the Army to suppress the revolt of the early fifties and aptly concludes that "it would be wrong, therefore, to attribute the vexations of the Naga problem to administrative ineptitude alone there were deeper forces at work reaching far back to the time of their first conquest by the British and it is questionable whether administrative ineptitude apart, the subsequent troubles and tensions would have been altogether averted".

With the benefit of hindsight, however, the author should have pointed out that while administrative ineptitude by itself might not have brought about the Naga alienation, it certainly hastened the process. The sad truth is that the political leadership, the bureaucratic administrators as well as the Army hierarchy were unfamiliar with the total architecture of an insurgency potential environment. There was neither an integrated plan nor cohesive political action. While the Army over-reacted with the British style punitive expeditions, the civil authorities were inactive and where the pressure of events stimulated action they responded only by putting out daily fires. The result was an inexorable drift towards insurgency. Hence, if purposeful action had been initiated, the author would have had little reason to draw such a fatalistic conclusion.

Assam had the unique feature of having the best combination of Governor and Chief Minister seen after Independence. While Akbar Hydri represented secularism, Gopinath Bardolei embodied enlightened administration. Together they instituted discreet and deliberate measures to absorb the hill States into "Greater Assam". Laudable as the concept was, the efforts produced opposite effects. The Assam chauvinism was brashly articulated in the declaration of Assamese as the official language. This step combined with the impatience alike of politicians and bureaucrats to bring the people of North-Eastern Frontier States to the broad mainstream of Indian culture resulted in a wide chasm between the conceptual framework and the implementation in field. The author identifies the indigenous desire of the more educated amongst the tribals to imitate the western ways of life. Thus their own brand of elites evolved. Zaphu Phizo was one such person. The seeds of 'independence' had been sown by Phizo much before 1947, when he collaborated with the Japanese invaders. The Japanese invasion also exposed the Nagas to the arcane environs of outside world. The indigenous desire for social change as well as the forced exposure to outside environs were uncontrollable phenomena that had their own dynamics and intensity. This could not have been averted by any administration. But what could have been staved off is the steady germination of seeds of separatism. This required astute statesmanship and the political will to implement the declared policy even at unacceptable political costs. That also demanded a select band of humane and understanding civil servants adept at the art of 'socialization'.

The chapter on "The New Deal" documents the traumatic experience of insurgency and the hamhanded way in which it was dealt with. "The big stick" was employed too often and the processes

touching the mind too occasionally. The luxury of 'parliamentary democracy' was inflicted too rapidly on a social fabric that was ill-equipped to absorb such a novel experience. Along with roads came the plainsmen of all shades, who did not prefer to remain inconspicuous like their British predecessor. The glaring disparity between obstentatious life style of the elected leaders and the spirit of self denial displayed by the under ground elements stimulated a shift of attitude in favour of the latter. Last but not the least was the pervasive influence of Christianity. In the eyes of the plainsmen large scale conversion into Christianity was associated with the eroding loyalty of the new converts to the Indian Republic. This misperceptions, the author contends, was the cause and the consequence of an unbroken period of mutual distrust and suspicion.

While the author rightly argues that during the uncertain period of transition following independence Nagas should have been centrally administered it is difficult to see as to how one could slow down the pace of road-building and allied developmental activities. No doubt, these brought many woes in their wake. But can aversion for the sight of blood prevent anyone from studying medicine? Similarly, the author betrays a prejudice when he concludes that Christianity was more appealing to the Nagas than other religions. Having roundly criticised the missionaries earlier it is strange that the author highlights its relative acceptability. It is an incontestable historical fact that the missionaries were the 'sappers and miners' of the British Empire and some of their questionable objectives had the tacit approval and even overt backing of the Raj. As a consequence, by and large, the converted Christians did not abhor the colonial rule. It is also argued that missionaries like Reverend Michael Scott over-stepped their religious mandate by dabbling in local politics. The introduction of "Freedom of Religion Bill in 1979" and the bitter reaction it drew from the North-Eastern States should be viewed in this context. While guarantee of the freedom of religion is a laudable and indispensable feature of any democratic constitution, no form of government—not even the most liberal democracy would countenance the preaching of secession under the garb of religious education.

While strongly denouncing the continued deployment of security forces the author observes that Naga problem will resolve itself, if handled with patience and restraint. Government should redress the long standing socio-political grievances promptly. The Mizo problem is dealt with in passing although in their case the decision to break with tradition ante dated the insurgency and found its expression in the spontaneous movement against the privileges enjoyed by the tribals. The Khasi

problem had different characteristics. Cast in a different mould, and subjected to gradual and extended exposure to outside influence, Khasis had a vital interest to maintain their links with India.

Outlining the baneful effects of developmental over investment, the author contends that it was not the founding father of our Constitution, but the elected leaders and weak governors who were remiss of not enforcing the constitutional safeguards. When this failure touched off understandable protest from the tribals, the powers that be dragged their feet till the crisis reached a flash point. Investment on development totally ignored the quality and meaning of life and caused a dangerous ecological imbalance. In retrospect, it is debatable whether even the rigid enforcement of constitutional safeguards would have stifled the tribal clamour for separate statehood. By the same token, it is a moot point whether administration could regulate the pace of change in the region. After all, the urge for faster change may well have originated indigenously.

Arunachal's history and cultural affinities present a different panorama. While there was a modicum of contact between the plainsmen and the tribals residing on the fringes of Assam, the inhabitants of remoter areas bordering the Mc Mahon line had been severely left alone by the British. The latter even borrowed the Ahom custom of bribing those fierce tribes with such scarce commodities as salt and textiles. The Chinese annexation of Tibet changed the complexion of the security environs of Arunachal. Here was a sensitive area amenable to strategic and political pressure, and hence, requiring an unique approach of administration. The raising of the cadre of the Frontier Administrative Service was the answer. The selection was based on personal interviews and thereafter, the candidates were given intensive training in tackling the problem of frontier tribes. The main emphasis was on winning the affection of the tribals by genuinely respecting the rich tapestry of their art, culture and institutions.

The author has lavished eulogy on Verrier Elwin, the pioneering architect of the Philosophy of NEFA. The underlying principle postulated that all initiatives in this region should be in consultation with the local people and must bear the stamp of their consent. Verrier Elwin headed the Department of Tribal Research which brought out several seminal and useful works on the need of tribals. The tribal culture and heritage were jealously guarded. The contact with the plainsmen and the indiscriminate impressment of the tribals as labourers were avoided by resorting to such inexpedient and expensive measures as aerial supply

of essential commodities. The much needed empathy was thus slowly but steadily built.

The achingmeri incident of 1953 where the Tagins massacred an unwary Assam Rifles patrol on a friendly mission is the sole exception, which if anything, proves the rule. The author in a queer exposition of unsound logic almost exonerates the perpetrators of this heinous crime and lays the blame squarely at the door-steps of officials and the Assam Rifles patrol. The former is assailed for not laying sufficient ground work for such a mission and the latter for ignoring the most elementary safety precautions.

However, the administrative response initiated at the instance of the author was apt and imaginative. The author contends that the crucial pay off came during the Chinese aggression of 1962 when the locals declared undivided loyalty to India despite the Chinese inducement, blandishments and subtle propaganda.

Having been an unrepentant advocate of tribal isolationism in the earlier chapters, the author relents and presents a modified view in the context of the Chinese aggression. While the desirability of having a friendly population along sensitive border is a self evident truth, no aggressor can be stopped only by the combined force of friendly population. The latter has to operate in concert with the regular Army. And the Army requires communication network to support these operations. In 1962 lack of communication imposed tremendous logistic burdens on an illprepared Indian Army. Are communication networks intended to secure better strategic posture always detrimental to winning the support of the local population? If construction of roads of strategic importance is necessary to safeguard the territorial integrity, what innovations should be initiated by the Govt. to minimise the baneful effects of constructional activities on the hearts and minds of the people? These were some of the wider issues the author should have addressed.

The epilogue is replete with 'punch lines'. It sounds an unequivocal warning to the eager-beavers of rapid development. The author's dissection of the socio-cultural problems of the Eastern Frontier should be the envy of any perceptive social scientist.

The minds and spirits of the people of the Eastern Frontier are likened to the organisms of distinctive living communities comprising many inter-dependent parts. Hence, it calls for a deliberate system analysis whose conclusions would suggest the desired pace and quality

of change. Unimaginative imposition would engender further alienation of these people.

Cultural aggression whether gratuitous or otherwise threatens to deprive the recipient community of its natural moorings. The sanction of the community in such cases provides the ballast against uncontrollable upheavals and eventual extinction of that community. As in any self-adjusting mechanism a happy compromise needs to be worked out between the competing requirements of the needs of indigenous culture and the planned or spontaneous changes wrought by outside forces.

The book is a cumulative end product of dedicated public service, deep erudition and wide ranging experience. If the author's impassioned involvement in the cause of the people of Eastern border has resulted in subjective aberrations, they are welcome and well intentioned. At the conceptual level the book should occupy the pride of place in the reading list prescribed for politicians, bureaucrats and the officers of the armed forces because the issues addressed are at once topical and actual. It will be a useful tool to sensitize the apathetic administration to the nuances of the tribal milieu. While the socio-economic questions have been amply discussed and recommendations proffered, the geopolitical dimensions thrown up by the Chinese aggression and the overt support rendered to the insurgents by our hostile neighbours have not been dwelt at length. Nevertheless, it is an erudite exegesis brilliantly diagnosing the entire gamut of delicate problems that have plagued the stability of the sensitive regions of the East. The suggestions and recommendations of the author need not always be followed; but they must always be considered by all clairvoyant decision makers.

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